



**LIFE**  
**AND DARING EXPLOITS**  
*of*  
**LORD DUNDONALD**



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**BLACKWOOD'S EIGHTEENPENNY BIOGRAPHIES**  
OF  
**REPRESENTATIVE MEN**  
OF  
**THE LAST HALF CENTURY.**

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PROSPECTUS.

ACCURATE and authentic facts about recent history are, in many respects, much more inaccessible to the ordinary run of readers, than information about events which have occurred centuries ago. The student who wishes to acquaint himself with the facts of the Thirty Years' War, the English Rebellion, or the American Revolution, can lay his hands at once upon authorities stamped as classical and accurate. But no one who cannot command the resources of a rarely furnished library, can inform his mind with the leading features of such recent transactions as the Trial of Queen Caroline, the Reform Bill, or the Agitation for Free Trade. In one respect, it must be allowed, literature has supplied works bringing down the history of England and of Europe to a recent date. Such books describe, *historically*, the course of events in the years between Waterloo and the Great Exhibition. But their ponderousness and high price put them beyond the reach of the many, and they leave the *biographical* field untouched. The most popular—probably the most instructive—form in which history can be cast, is to select as the central object of interest some REPRESENTATIVE MAN, and to group around him the successive events and fellow-workers associated with him in his career. There is thus formed a combination of that personal interest which the biography shares with the romance, with that solid element of instruction which is common to the historical work, and every other kind of work which deals with facts.

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OF

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OF

### **THE LAST HALF CENTURY.**

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OF  
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LONDON:  
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1861.





## P R E F A C E.

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IMMEDIATELY upon the death of Lord Dundonald the author of this book began to collect the materials which are condensed in the succeeding narrative. He undertook the task, believing that few illustrious English warriors of our own and our fathers' times, and few of those who have within the same period taken a foremost part in the advancement of the national liberties, present a more instructive and attractive theme for a cheap popular biography. Very soon after the work was commenced, it was discovered that much longer time must be bestowed upon its preparation than had been anticipated. There was a large number of years to traverse, most of them crowded with important incidents. This of itself was enough to prevent the possibility of hasty workmanship. And besides, each leading event of Lord Dundonald's life has been made the subject of very keen dispute ; and the conflicting materials on the comparison of which must depend the judgments of the

biographer and of posterity, are scattered in very various, frequently in recondite, quarters. These considerations sufficiently explain and justify the interval of months which has separated the publication of the narrative from the death of its subject.

A more immature work would doubtless have gained some share of the success which is easily purchased by the early production of catch-penny compilations on the lives of illustrious men. This work appears under the disadvantage of being forestalled by preceding publications, which must be classed under this not very creditable category. There is, however, a large class—probably the majority—of readers who look for that care in research and maturity of reflection which consist only with deliberate preparation. To these we preferred to make our appeal, rather than to depend upon a quickly-obliterated curiosity, the attempt to profit by which would have sacrificed all chance of the acceptance of the book as a permanent component part of popular biographical literature.

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# LIFE AND DARING EXPLOITS

OF

## LORD DUNDONALD.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### ANCESTRY AND EARLY DAYS.

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A.D. 1062—1793.

Descent traced to a Norwegian stock—A Cochrane made Earl of Mar—Royalist Cochranes in the Great Rebellion—The family raised to the peerage as Barons Cochrane—Services to the Duke of Monmouth—First Earl of Dundonald—Pedigree of Thomas, tenth Earl—Life and character of his father—His scientific discoveries and their cost—Imperfections of the hero's early education—A lesson in philology—The French tutor, the magpies, and the cherries—Lord Cochrane designed for the army—His curious drill and costume—Encounter with London *gamins*—Five years of idleness—Receives his commission as midshipman.

ENGLAND, of all nations, ancient or existing, has had most copiously written, its history in all details—its constituent races, its politics, its progress, its social life. But if there be still one department of our ethnological annals comparatively unexplored, it regards the question as to how far Scandinavian, as distinguished from Teutonic, blood was infused into

the national veins, in the ages that preceded and immediately succeeded the Norman Conquest. We do not urge with conspicuous prominence the Danish element in the Normans themselves, whose ducal family, again, were of Norwegian stock. For, so far as the roll of William's army remains matter of history, we know that many races fought under him at Hastings; Burgundians, Poitevins, Brabanters, and a host of other mercenaries, as well as the Franco-Danes of Normandy proper. But before Edward the Confessor had made the unpatriotic will which ultimately cost Harold the briefly enjoyed throne that the love of the people for Earl Godwin had won him, the greater parts of England north of the Humber, and of the Eastern Counties, were peopled by inhabitants of pure Danish origin.

If our historical ethnologists have erred by a too negligent recognition of the large infusion of Danish blood into the Angle and Saxon stock, still more have even those who have been most fully informed in this respect ignored the large influx of Norwegian, as distinguished from Danish, blood into the northern part of the kingdom. The learned professor of history at Christiania, Mr. Munch, recently astonished even the most scholarly of English antiquarians by establishing the fact that the Norwegian kings reigned over Man and the Hebrides for three centuries. That the Norwegian rule over Orkney and Shetland was prolonged till a much later date, was already matter of notoriety.

In 1263 the Danish king Haco was defeated by Alexander III., king of Scotland, at Largs. Three years after, by a formal document, still preserved by

its citation in the historically reliable "Chronicle of the Isle of Man," the sovereignty of that island and the Western Isles was ceded to the victors of Largs. Four years previous to the latter date we have the first authentic record of the ancestors of Thomas Cochrane, tenth Earl of Dundonald, "the Paladin of the nineteenth century."

The careful Crawford, in his "Peerage of Scotland," says—

"The first of whom I have found upon record is Waldenus de Coveran, *i. e.*, Cochran, who in 1262 is witness to the grant which Dungall, the son of Swayn,\* made to Water Stewart, Earl of Monteith, of sundry lands," &c., &c.

We have the signature of another Coveran in the famous Ragman Roll, swearing fealty to Edward I. thirty-four years later, at Caerlaversck. In the great year which witnessed Cressy, we have another Coveran witnessing the election of an abbot of Paisley. The next mention of the family is as "Cochran;" and they are specified as lords of "the house and barony of Cochran, the principal manour of the Cochrans." To a later Cochran Robert II. granted a charter. In 1456 Robert Cochran surrendered his estate to his son Allan, that he might devote himself to the pursuit of architecture at the court of James III., a great patron of art of every description. Buchanan, in his History of Scotland, says of this Cochran, who ultimately (although to his own personal ruin) seems to have done more than all his ancestors to advance the fortunes of the family :—

\* These are Norwegian names, and go far to fortify the tradition of the Dundonald family, that they are of Norwegian stock.



"He came to be known to the king by a duel which he fought with another, and presently from an architect came to be made a courtier, and was put in a fair way of rising to some greater advancement; for having performed some lighter matters entrusted to him with diligence, and also accommodating himself to the king's humour, he was soon admitted to advise concerning the grand affairs of the kingdom."

There are many older noble families in Scotland than the oldest of the English coroneted houses—if, that is to say, we dismiss the mythical descents of such as the Courtenays and the Caradocs. James III. proved nearly as assiduous a creator of new houses as, some years later, were the English Tudors. And there was in Scotland no such availing pretext of new noble blood being required as was furnished south of the Tweed by the extermination wrought by the feuds of the Roses. The jealousy of the nobles of ancient creation was fiercely enkindled against the recently ennobled royal favourites. Angus, Argyre, Huntley, Hume, Fleming, Drummond, and many more, met in rebellion at the Borough Muir. They were successful, "Bell-the-Cat" being leader. The king "was put in a gentle imprisonment in the Castle of Edinburgh." Cochran, who had been made Earl of Mar, was hanged, with others, on Lauder Bridge. He would not stoop to beg his life, and was refused his only wish, that "he might be hanged with one of the silken cords of his pavilion."

In the reign of James IV. we find the grandson of the murdered architect-earl possessed of lands in Perthshire, as well as his ancestral barony. The impression on his seal, which remains attached to a

document endowing a monastery in 1519, is "Three Boars Heads Erazed," which still remain the crest of the Dundonald family. A few generations later we find the estates alienated to a younger member of the family of Blair, who married a Cochrane, only child of her father, and took the family name.

Hastily glancing over the remainder of the family pedigree, we find a Colonel Alexander Cochrane, commanding the king's forces in Ireland in 1641; a Colonel Hugh, serving with many other Scottish gentlemen, under the great Gustavus Adolphus; and Colonel Bryse Cochrane, slain fighting against the Parliamentary Army in 1650. These were three of six brothers. Sir John, the eldest of the six and head of the house, was also a warm partisan of the king. He accompanied Charles II. into foreign parts, and was sent upon the singular ambassadorial duty of soliciting aid for the Royalist cause "from the Scots merchants in Poland"! Dying without issue, his next brother, William, succeeded to him.

The latter was created by Charles, while imprisoned at Carisbrooke, Lord Cochrane of Dundonald. To the son of the slain monarch, as his elder brother had done, he maintained his allegiance. Shortly after the Restoration he was sworn a Privy Councillor. He was made a Commissioner of the Scottish Treasury, and prospered to a degree which far more than made up the fine of £5,000 in which the Commonwealth had amerced him. On the 12th of May, 1669, Lord Cochrane (who, by the way, had made large pecuniary contributions to the king when an exile) received another mark of royal favour. He was advanced another step in the peerage, and

created first Earl of Dundonald, his minor title being "Lord Cochrane of Paisley and Ochiltree." The Earl of Dundonald had further, in past years, established a claim to the kindly regard of the Merry Monarch by the fatherly care he had bestowed on the child of Lucy Waters. After Monmouth became the husband of Ann, Duchess of Buccleugh, to whom Sir Walter's "Last Minstrel" is represented as having sung his lay,

"Where Newark's stately tower  
Looks out from Yarrow's birken bower,—"

the earl was of much service to the ducal pair by journeys he undertook before they were of age, and in furtherance of their interests to their estates in Ettrick Forest and Upper Teviotdale. His second son became implicated in the rebellion of Argyle and Monmouth against the Papist James. Only large bribes to the courtiers and Jesuit instigators of the tyrannical bigot, saved the young Cochrane from the fate of MacCallummore and the rebel of Sedgemoor. Bishop Burnet on this point says:—

"That Cochrane should be forgiven by a prince, vindictive beyond all example, seemed incredible. But Cochrane was the youngest son of a rich family; it was, therefore, only by sparing him that money could be made out of him. His father, Lord Dundonald, offered a bribe to priests of the royal household, and a pardon was granted."

The first earl was succeeded by his grandson; his son's death having preceded his own. The next earl died without issue. To him succeeded, as fourth and

fifth earls, his brother and his nephew. At the death of the successor of the latter, direct male issue failed and the lately deceased earl, tenth of the name was descended from the youngest son of the first earl. His grandfather and father had been respectively eighth and ninth earls.

Archibald, ninth Earl of Dundonald, served in his youth for a few years in the navy, in which he rose no higher than to lieutenant's rank. His younger brother, Alexander, became a rear-admiral. The earl himself was disgusted with the service, by the disagreeables of a cruise on the Guinea Coast. The unfavourable impression produced on his mind was, as we shall hereafter see, attended with this further consequence. He interposed every objection to his illustrious son entering the service, and thereby retarded the commencement of his career afloat till some years after the usual age at which midshipmen commence their apprenticeship. Earl Archibald next tried the army, but from that service he also retired disgusted.

The truth was that his tastes lay in quite a different direction. He was a zealous scientific inquirer, and as zealous in the application of scientific discoveries to the actual needs of life. Either from a want of practicalness, or from ill-fate and opposition (as his son believed), or, as is perhaps more likely, from the circumstance that his own discoveries and inventions were previously, or simultaneously, made by other men who had a more business-like power of bringing the results of their labour before the inert public—from whichever of these causes the result proceeded, the result was simply this—to complete

by large experimental outlay, the impoverishment of the ancestral estates, already much impaired by several predecessors in the earldom. Our hero "never inherited a foot" of the ancient barony or the Cochranes, or any other of the family lands. He started, in other words, in one of the most unfortunate of all positions for an ambitious youth ; he was the heir to an old and honourable title, but was as poor as the most obscure and pedigreeless plebeian adventurer.

Among other of the old earl's projects and crotchets were these : barilla in his time was the only alkali used in the manufacture of soap and glass. This was expensive, and he proposed as a substitute soda made from common salt. Then he projected an improvement in the preparation of alumina, as used by the calico and silk printers. He urged the equality of indigenous to Senegal gum. He had new inventions, too, to apply to the preparation of sal-ammoniac and white lead. His project of extracting tar from coal, with the double purpose of employing the extract in the preservation of ships' bottoms, and the cheap refuse in the furnaces of ironfounders, was the chief agent in the process of alienating the remnants of the family acres. Further, the late earl claimed for his father the first discovery of the illuminating power of carbureted hydrogen, to which we are now indebted for the illumination of our streets and houses. He is said to have lighted a gas jet at his works in Culross, on the north side of the Firth of Forth, which was clearly visible on the opposite shores of the Lothians.

His treatise on the "Connection between Agriculture and Chemistry" was published in 1795. The work of Sir Humphry Davy, to whom is universally

accorded the honour of being the founder of scientific farming, did not see the light till some years later. To the earl belong at least these merits; he was the first to point out the superiority of malted grain as cattle food; he urged that peat morass might be drained and tilled with fertility; and he much extended the field of refuse substances which yield good manures.

Probably there was none of the earl's inventions which he pressed with more pertinacity on the notice of the government and the shipping trade than the usefulness of coal tar as an agent for the preservation from the worm of the hulls of ships. But his success was *nil*. The Board of Admiralty—from the first origin of our navy until now, the most corrupt, immovable, and irresponsible of all the departments—refused even to try the innovation. He attempted to convince a large ship-builder of Limehouse of the efficacy of coal tar. The reply he received, and it was representative of many others, was, “My Lord, we live by repairing ships, as well as by building them, and the worm is our best friend. Rather than use your preparation I would cover ships' bottoms with honey to attract the worm!” There is hardly anything else to record in the life of the old earl. He seems to have been a sanguine, easy-going, yet not easily baffled man—not easily baffled, but without the full determination requisite to compel an age, indifferent to innovations, to recognize of the value of his inventions. He does not seem to have paid very much heed to the training of his son. He gave him, however, warm affection; and when his after greatness, and a plain spokenness, somewhat incon-

sistent with the position, or at least damaging to the interests of a subordinate, earned for him the disfavour of the Court and the Admiralty, we find the old earl loyally using all his personal endeavours with the influential peers of his acquaintance to obtain the just recognition of the services of the daring Captain Cochrane. Possibly the most valuable service that the scientific inquirer rendered to the chivalrous naval hero, was the fact that he left him nothing but an honourable name. The *res angusta domi* compelled him to depend upon himself, and to cleave with his sword the arduous road to his own and his country's fame. The old earl lived till 1823, long enough to have seen his son outlive in public, if not in court estimation, the calumnies and disparagement which had clouded both his conduct at sea and his personal honour.

Anna Gilchrist, the mother of our hero, was the daughter of a naval captain. He performed off Yarmouth a dashing naval exploit in the early part of the Seven Years' War: with a small vessel carrying only 24 guns, he boarded and captured a French frigate, the *Danaë*, with a crew of 340 men and 40 guns. The exploit cost him his life. His widow, the earl's maternal grandmother, took some interest in his education, and thus supplied the place of his mother, who died in his ninth year.

After these scanty references to the distant and immediate progenitors of our hero, we now proceed to the succinct narrative of the leading events of his own romantic, honourable, and patriotic life. He was born at Annsfield, in Lanarkshire, on the 14th day of December, 1775. In his seventh year he

accompanied his father to London. His memory retained one striking incident of the journey. The earl stopped at Handsworth to visit James Watt; and the leading subject of the conversation of the two *savans* was the various properties of coal, especially its powers of illumination.

The death of our hero's mother, and the absorption of his father's attention in affairs beyond the limits of his family, seems early to have interfered with his education. The parish minister of Culross offered (it would seem gratuitously) his services. But the father having no sufficient means of making remuneration, his pride prevented the acceptance of the proposal. His grandmother provided a tutor, but from him not much instruction seems to have been imbibed. The most vivid recollection Lord Dundonald had of this worthy was a cuff on the ear he received for asking the difference between an interjection and a conjunction. "This solution of the difficulty," he says, "effectually repressed further philological inquiry on my part." His next preceptor was a Frenchman, and who was to the Culross villagers most odious as a Papist. Monsieur Durand did not, of course, attend the parish church. In its neighbourhood was the old orchard of Culross Abbey. It abounded in cherries, of which the locally-hated Frenchman was remarkably fond. So also were the indigenous magpies. These cunning birds discovered that the period of divine service, while the whole of the parishioners were out of reach, was the most favourable occasion for the commission of their depredations. This, however, was by no means to the taste of the Frenchman, and on one Sabbath-day



he made a raid upon his rival fruit-*gourmets* with a fowling-piece. The sound of this artillery appalled the primitive Sabbatarian ideas of the Scottish villagers. The unpopularity of the alien reached its furthest limit; the full pains and fulminations of the kirk sessions were in progress of preparation. Some kind of penance would, beyond doubt, have been exacted. But the earl interfered and rescued his dependant. However, the Frenchman was sulky, and threw up his appointment. This unlucky shot cost the young Cochranes what little proficiency in the French language they had attained.

Immediately after this occurrence Lord Dundonald went to London in furtherance of his coal-tar project. His son accompanied him. Of the success of his endeavours the reader has been already informed. His failure was not detrimental to the interests of his son's education. He says, "Unsuccessful everywhere, my father turned his attention to myself." The earl designed his son for the army, the young lord was as strongly inclined to the navy, and in this disposition he was encouraged by his uncle, Captain Cochrane. For a time, however, his father was inflexible. Meanwhile, the kind and sagacious uncle, foreseeing which would be the final issue of the contest, had his nephew's name privately entered in several ships' books, so that the "time" of the future midshipman was running on long ere he was gazetted. This corrupt practice of the period told largely in favour of the promotion, through the junior grades of the service, of the future sailor.

All the while the father had done the same for his son in the army. For some time the young lord was,

on paper, at once a naval and a military servant of his sovereign—a cadet in the ship *Vesuvius*, and an ensign in the 104th Regiment. The father directed his son's education with a view to the profession which he himself had chosen for him. He was entrusted to a crabbed old drill-sergeant, who cropped to the poll his boyish flow of locks, and plastered the residuum, in strict conformity with the contemporary military practice, with a compound of candle-grease and flour. His neck, "from childhood open to the lowland breeze," was cooped up in a leathern stock, and he was clothed in a cramping uniform. From the regulation model his father permitted only one deviation. A staunch Whig himself, he clad his lad in the colours of his party—blue coat and yellow waistcoat and breeches.

The earl could hardly have chosen any device more eminently calculated to foster the boy's liking for the freedom of the sea and of the sailor than the employment of this expedient—worthy of the great Friedrich Wilhelm himself—for bending his child to his purpose. The queer appearance which the youth made caused him to be mobbed by the London street-boys, a body which possesses more power of extempore caricature of anything *outré* than any other in the world. Fresh from the jeers and slang of such a self-constituted tribunal of costume, who surrounded Lord Cochrane one day as he passed Charing Cross, he rushed home chafed and indignant, and demanded that the martinet accoutrements should be thrown aside, and that he should be allowed to go to sea with his uncle. The earl responded to the request by thrashing his son. But the stronger will ultimately

prevailed; the name of Ensign Lord Cochrane was removed from the books of the 104th Regiment. From the period of this concession Lord Dundonald may be considered as being emancipated from paternal control, or, at least, influence. He found in his uncle at once a more influential patron and a more congenial preceptor and governor.

About this time his father contracted a second marriage, by which he considerably repaired his fortune. Some portion of his increased resources was expended in the resumption of his son's education, at a French school in Kensington. But ere six months the new fortune had been so far squandered as to necessitate the withdrawal of the boy from school. The earl took his family back to Scotland. The children had a tutor, but he was unable to conduct the education of his eldest pupil beyond the rudimentary boundary, to which, spite of all disadvantages, he had already attained. But the strong and self-reliant lad had already made the discovery that "his future career depended on his own efforts." This arduous process of self-culture continued through four and-a-half dreary years. Lord Cochrane was seventeen-and-a-half ere his father gave his final consent to his going to sea. It was decided that he should join his uncle's ship, the *Hind*. More than consent he could not give. The young midshipman was indebted to his relative, Lord Hopetoun, for a hundred pounds wherewith to purchase the requisites for his scanty outfit. His kind-hearted father could give little; what he could he did. He gave his son his own gold watch as a keepsake. This gift was the total amount of Lord Dundonald's inheritance. \*

## CHAPTER II.

## EARLY CRUISES—TRAINING IN SEAMANSHIP.

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A. D. 1793—1798.

Lord Cochrane joins the *Hind*—Jack Larmour—A Midshipman's Chest—He learns practical seamanship—The *Hind* sent to Norway—Objects of the Cruise—Norwegian hospitality—The Ship's Parrot—"Let go!"—Lord Cochrane appointed to the *Thetis*—A Five Years' Cruise in American Waters—Sees no fighting—Nova Scotia fogs—Strange Phenomenon in an Iceberg—Impressment—Appointed Lieutenant—Transferred to the *Africa*—Porpoises and a Theory of Pain—Appointed to the *Resolution*, Flag-ship of the Admiral—Life ashore—An Encounter with a Bellicose Sow—"Roasted instead of the Pig"—Shirks the Bottle—Returns to England.

THE paternal grandmother of the young midshipman, the Dowager Countess of Dundonald, was about to undertake a journey to London to visit her brother, General James Stuart. Her grandson accompanied her. He declined his uncle's invitation to loiter in his Grosvenor Street mansion, and at once proceeded to join the *Hind* at Sheerness. He stepped on board on the 27th of June, 1793; almost five months after the declaration by the French Convention of what turned out to be a twenty-two years' land and naval war against Great Britain.

Captain Cochrane conducted his nephew on board ship, and at once introduced him to his First Lieuten-

ant, Jack Larmour, Cochrane's future instructor in seamanship. His tuition, in his early cruises, was confined to that branch. It was not until his third that he had an occasion of acquiring the rudiments of fighting. The young sailor's introduction to his profession was not very encouraging. Jack Larmour had been raised to his rank from before the mast. He was a fair representative of a large class of officers then to be found, somewhat plentifully, in the British Navy. Favoritism had nearly all to do with the appointment of officers to superior ranks. There were not a few commodores and post captains who knew hardly anything of seamanship, who owed their double epaulettes to back stairs influence. These required competent assessors, men who really knew how to navigate a ship and take her into action. Hence, a considerable proportion of seamen were promoted, though they owed their good fortune to anything but the modern feeling in favour of a proportionate promotion of common soldiers and seamen. When Cochrane went on board, Larmour, in common sailor's clothes, with marlin-spike round his neck, and handling a lump of grease, was busily engaged in putting the rigging in proper condition for the approaching voyage. The midshipman, although the near relative of his captain, he received with gruff independence. Appearances, indeed, were against the young lord. As it was, he was actually in his eighteenth year. And his great stature, of above six feet, made him seem considerably older. There was a suspicious probability on the face of things, that he was a representative of the lubberly "ne'er-do-wells," who had tried everything on land, and failed, and

whom Jack Larmour's previous experience made him aware were often shovelled into the navy, as a last resort, and to get them out of the way of wearied friends.

With remarkable sagacity Captain Cochrane determined in no way to protect or favour his nephew, but to leave him to be freely tutored by his valuable subordinate in his own rough way. When the lieutenant and the midshipman were left together, the former gruffly ordered the youth "to get his traps below." Obediently Lord Cochrane proceeded to do as he was bid, but had hardly commenced the operation when it was by order arrested. We have seen that the kit was modest and frugal, but to Larmour's ideas it was ridiculously prodigal. He grumbled,— "This, Lord Cochrane's chest! Does Lord Cochrane think he is going to bring a cabin aboard! The service is going to the devil! Get it up on the main-deck." This order obeyed, while Lord Cochrane was engaged in examining his quarters, he was interrupted by a strange sound of sawing. He rushed on deck, and the first thing that met his eye was his clothing, &c., tumultuously strewn about the deck, while the lieutenant was superintending the sawing off a sufficient number of inches of the chest to bring the dimensions down to what in his belief suited the requirements of "young gentlemen." This completed, and Cochrane having been treated to a diatribe against the absurdity of having the lock placed in the broad instead of the narrow side of the locker, the latter being so much more convenient where narrowness of space had to be encountered, the strange episode was ended. Cochrane—who always

afterwards showed his capacity of keeping his temper, if not his "own counsel," under the strongest provocation—showed no signs of annoyance. He afterwards, when he knew Jack better, learned to believe that the whole thing had been done to try his temper, and discover what he was made of.

The two soon got to understand each other. Larmour's relaxation was to lay off his uniform, don his old and more accustomed garb, and engage in some work of practical seamanship. Cochrane followed his example, and showed his instructor that, though a lord, he wished to become a practical seaman. Only from such a preceptor, willing as in any circumstances he would have been, could he have learned so quickly as he did, those practical and frequently despised details of his profession, the knowledge of which won him so many prizes and so much renown in after years. Jack, who thoroughly believed in the peccability of all midshipmen, only mast-headed his diligent pupil once. Their friendship was fast and unbroken.

The war was commenced, and the English government was busy with its preparations. It was not Cochrane's fortune in his first voyage to be dispatched to any of the localities where hostilities on a large scale might be expected. The destination of the *Hind* was to the coast of Norway, and the north part of the German Ocean. The object was twofold. In the first place it was believed that privateers were lurking in the Norwegian fiords, as ambush for raids against English merchantmen. And there were tidings of a French fleet and convoy coming from India, and sailing round by the north of the Orkneys

to escape the British cruisers. The *Hind*, however, found nothing. If she had met with a formidable antagonist her mettle would have been well tested, for she carried only twenty-eight guns, and these but nine-pounders. Captain Cochrane, who evidently was an indulgent officer, allowed his subordinates much leave on shore. Cochrane, perhaps predisposed by the family tradition of Norwegian descent, was most favourably impressed by the hospitality and simple-hearted qualities of the Norsemen. Sleigh-rides, and feasts on shore, to which there was always a hearty welcome, went far to mitigate the unpleasant features of a sailor's first cruise.

The officers returned on board the *Hind* the hospitality of their entertainers on shore. On one occasion, when a party of Norwegian ladies and gentlemen were coming on board, a somewhat ludicrous incident occurred. The *Hind* boasted a wonderful parrot. Its powers of imitation were considerably above the average. One of its favourite tricks was to imitate the boatswain's whistle, which it reproduced with such perfect accuracy as to deceive the whole crew, who at once mustered on deck, to the especial annoyance of Lieutenant Larmour. On the occasion previously alluded to, the guests were being slung on deck by a "whip" suspended from the mainyard, and worked pully-wise by sailors, who could not themselves see the result of their labours. A lady was midway between the gunwale and the water. Suddenly was heard the order, "Let go!" The order of Poll was at once obeyed, and in a trice the fair Norwegian was floundering in the water. Nothing worse came of it than a fright and a wetting. Such amusing



incidents, and giving and receiving of hospitality, careful attention to every detail of duty never being omitted, made up our hero's first cruise.

The *Hind* returned to port; Captain Cochrane was appointed to the *Thetis*, a larger vessel. Larmour and his pupil exchanged along with their commander. The former was quite in his element equipping the new craft. Cochrane joined him, and the two, uninterrupted by the ease to which they were entitled, clad in sailor's garb, were busily engaged in knotting, splicing, gammoning, rigging, &c. At last she was ready for sea, and was ordered to join Admiral Murray's squadron, the destination of which was North America. The prescribed duties of the fleet were threefold. The primary object was to re-capture the islands of Miguilon and St. Pierre, which had been taken from the French in 1778, and returned at the peace of 1783. English commerce and fisheries on the Nova Scotia coast were to be protected, and a look out was to be kept for American cruisers conveying to France provisions, and articles contraband of war. In all, Lord Cochrane was absent in this expedition five years. During all that time, he was never in action. He is careful to allege that he was not even a witness of the gallant capture of five French frigates, off the mouth of the Chesapeake, by the *Hussar* and *Thetis*, a share in which is attributed to him by all our naval annalists. During the whole term of his absence, he was engaged in sailing backwards and forwards, between the coasts of Florida and Nova Scotia. The frequent fog in the latter locality, was itself a strong obstacle in the way of naval achievements.

The squadron sailed from Plymouth. No incident of the passage across the Atlantic is recorded, save this one. They passed a numerous fleet of icebergs. On the side of one the astonished sailors saw elevated a hundred feet above the surface of the waters, and imbedded in the face of the iceberg, three vessels of considerable size. A similar phenomenon, recorded recently, as having been observed by one of the parties exploring in the track of Sir John Franklin, it will be fresh in the memories of our readers, was derided as a traveller's tale, or at most an optical delusion. The authority of Lord Dundonald, in a latitude where such delusion was impossible, lends a strong confirmation of probability to the statement. The principal duty of the squadron, on their arrival at Halifax, was to detain American vessels laden with corn, and to impress English subjects serving under the Stars and Stripes. The latter function met with Lord Cochrane's strong disapproval. In the reduction of the two islands, he does not seem to have been in any way engaged.

On the 14th of January, 1795, he was appointed third lieutenant of the *Thetis*, having not then completed eighteen months of service. But his longer term of rating as a nominal cadet, availed to make his promotion good. Here, as elsewhere, in his early career, he reaped some benefit from being a lord, and from having an uncle high in the list of captains. From the *Thetis* he was, shortly after his promotion, transferred to the *Africa*, at the earnest and flattering solicitation of the captain of that ship. While cruising near Florida, he was wont to amuse himself by discharging, by hand, barbed prongs at the porpoises which

gambolled round the vessel. The ship's surgeon made a wager that he would not throw one of his missiles to a certain distance. In his eagerness, one of the hooks severely lacerated his forefinger. He was just at this time in the philosophical stage of some young men's mental development, and he had been wont to maintain with some pertinacity the theory, that there is no such thing as pain. When the wound was being dressed, he screamed out in spite of his philosophy. "What!" said the waggish surgeon, "I thought there was no such thing as pain!" The disputant, not liking to acknowledge himself beaten, casuistically maintained that his cry sprung from a mental source, caused by the sight of his own blood, and did not proceed from any pained state of the nerves of sensibility. However, his experience caused him quietly to relinquish his theory.

In 1797, he gained a further and very gratifying step. Admiral Vandeput had succeeded Admiral Murray as commander on the station. He appointed Lord Cochrane his lieutenant in his own flag-ship, the *Resolution*. As the French were frightened off the coast, and the British and American governments had come to an amicable arrangement, there was no work for our cruisers. The fleet was moored in the Chesapeake, and Cochrane spent much of his time on shore, frequently enjoying the hospitalities of his superior officer. On one occasion, the admiral invited his lieutenant to spend a week with him. Lord Cochrane was desirous of making use of his rifle to contribute to his host's table. He was informed that a particular part of an adjoining forest abounded with

wild hogs. He failed to find any, although he mistook a wild-looking domestic sow for one. She was attended by a litter of young pigs. One of these fell to the gun of the sportsman. But the incensed and bereaved mother charged the slayer; and his single barrel being unloaded, he was forced to find refuge in a tree, at the foot of which his assailant kept guard so long, that not only was he too late to deliver his game into the cook's hands in time for the evening meal, but was himself an hour too late for dinner. He gave, with great simplicity, the true cause of his detention, and found himself by the guests "roasted instead of the pig."

It was Lord Dundonald's creditable boast in the evening of his days, that he had never once been the worse for liquor. This was the more to his honour, that in his youth it was the frequent habit of "gentlemen" to go to bed drunk. And the navy was certainly far from the first of professions to adopt the more sober code of manners. On the evening of the day of the porcine encounter, the bottle circulated very freely, and no one was expected to pass it without filling his glass. To prevent intoxication, Lord Cochrane resorted to this expedient; he leant his head upon his left hand, and though he repeatedly filled his glass, he emptied its contents, not into his mouth, but into his wide coat-sleeve. At last some Argus-eyed guest detected the trick and divulged it. The usual penalty, of drinking a whole bottle, imposed by the custom of the day upon those who "flinched," was unanimously imposed. But the abstemious youth, thinking discretion the better part of valour, fled from the room, and though pursued by his tipsy

and half-tipsy associates, made good his retreat, and ran to earth in a neighbouring farm-house.

After his return to England, in the latter part of 1798, Lord Cochrane did not wait long for employment. Now, for the first time, he really did see some service, and fairly graduated in the art of war.

## CHAPTER III.

## A FRUITLESS EXPEDITION.

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A. D. 1798—1800.

Appointed to the Mediterranean Fleet—Blockade of Cadiz—"The stinking Scotch ship"—An altercation and a Court-martial—A French Fleet heard of—Bungling in high places—Long odds—A brave Commander—"Between the devil and the deep sea"—A fight frustrated—A bloodless victory—A chase—Junction of the French and Spanish Fleets—They escape through the Straits of Gibraltar—Safe in Brest Harbour—They escape again—A fight in Gibraltar Roads—English sailors cowards for once—Acquaintance with Lord Nelson—His characteristic advice—Cochrane appointed Prize-master of the *Généreux*—Providential escape from destruction—A gale—Good seamanship—Appointed to his First Command.

LORD COCHRANE did not wait long in England for a new appointment. Here, as previously, it was proved that he was none the worse for being a lord. After six years wasted in fruitless cruises, except so far as his training in seamanship was concerned, he was now fortunate enough to be appointed to a vessel destined for the Mediterranean, at that time the especial seat of the naval war. His new patron was his compatriot, Lord Keith, who was sent out as second in command of the Mediterranean fleet under Lord St. Vincent, and whom he ultimately superseded. Lord Cochrane sailed, at first as a super-

numery, in Lord Keith's flag-ship. After the arrival of the squadron at Gibraltar, which was Lord St. Vincent's head-quarters, Lord Cochrane was commissioned to the *Barfleur*, to which Lord Keith had shifted his flag. The fleet had work at once cut out for it. It was to blockade a Spanish fleet lying in the harbour of Cadiz, and to prevent its junction with the French fleet. Lord Keith commanded a force varying, in the early part of the year (1799), from eleven to fifteen ships of the line, but without frigates. Although the Spaniards had twenty ships of the line, with a full complement of frigates and smaller vessels, they would not be tempted out from the protection of the shore batteries. No fighting yet, therefore, for our hero. His chief duties were of a peculiarly unpleasant description. The *Barfleur* received the denomination of the "Stinking Scotch Ship," from the following cause. Food and water for the fleet had to be obtained from the neutral Barbary coast. On this errand the *Barfleur* was kept running backwards and forwards between the two continents. In connection with this duty a very good, but very disgusting, stroke of business was done. In place of the purchased cattle being slain on shore, they were slaughtered on board ship, certain of the officers appropriating the hides as their perquisite. These were stowed away, uncleansed, in casks; and, as the fragments of flesh still adhering rotted, an oozy filth ran out from the crevices of the barrels, and filled the vessel with stench. Hence the *sobriquet*. By this transaction the First Lieutenant chiefly profited. With his usual plain-spokenness, Lord Cochrane had expressed his opinion of the whole affair. It is not to

be wondered at that the ready tongues of those already envious of his rapid promotion carried what he said to the lieutenant's ear. That officer determined to be revenged. An early, though a trivial, opportunity occurred.

The *Barfleur* was lying in Tetuan Roads, busily engaged in the butchering and hide-merchant business. Lord Cochrane had leave on shore, for the purpose of shooting wild fowl. In the eagerness of his sport he got himself covered with mud. So dirty was he that he declined to return with other officers in the pinnace, but waited for the launch, which had rougher work to do, and carried only seamen. His term of leave had just expired when he stepped on board. Thinking that it would be disrespectful to report himself to his commanding officer in the muddy condition of his clothing, he ran down into the ward-room to put on clean garments. He was not yet dressed, when the object of his censures came into the room, and angrily demanded why he had not reported himself. Lord Cochrane temperately assigned the reason. He was still more rudely addressed, and he respectfully reminded the lieutenant that he was breaking one of his own regulations by talking of matters connected with the service in the ward-room. The lieutenant was still more violent. And Lord Cochrane firmly said, "We will, if you please, talk of this in another place." This the lieutenant reported to the captain as a virtual challenge. The captain, a wise and good-natured man, saw at once how matters stood, and sending for Cochrane, he counselled him to tender an apology. This proposal Cochrane, not inexcusably, declined; asserting that



he had done no wrong. A court-martial was demanded by the lieutenant; its result was the advice to the outspoken youth, "to be more careful in future." After the court was dismissed, Lord Keith, who had been its president, kindly said to his *protégé*, "Now, Lord Cochrane, pray avoid for the future all flippancy to superior officers." The secretary of the court, who would also seem to have been ill-disposed to Cochrane, unfairly embodied this private communication in the official report which it was his duty to furnish to the admiralty. This Lord Cochrane afterwards discovered, in a very unpleasant way. He learned that there was a "black mark" against him at Whitehall, and that his further promotion was, in consequence, retarded.

To coax the fleet out of Cadiz waters, Lord Keith took off his whole force to the African coast. While cruising about, tidings came that five Spanish ships had come out from Ferrol; and immediately afterwards it was announced that a French fleet was sailing down the Portuguese coast for Gibraltar. Small as was the admiral's force, he rejoiced that even such odds were now about to be concentrated within his reach. However, although with every opportunity so favourable, his strong wish to engage the combined enemy seems to have been entirely frustrated by the orders given by his superior, Lord St. Vincent. He stood for Cadiz, sending at the same time to Gibraltar for reinforcements, which he received in considerable strength. In all he had sixteen sail. When the Spaniards and French were sighted, they were found, together, to number fifty-five ships of the line, independently of smaller vessels. The English got back to

their old blockading position in time to prevent the junction of the two hostile fleets. That, of course, only put them in such a position as to be raked by both. Lord Keith himself said that he was "between the devil and the deep sea." Strange to say, neither Spaniard nor Frenchman attacked. The latter sailed off under cover of the darkness of night. Keith had really gained a most important bloodless victory by the promptitude with which he interposed to prevent the junction. He received no official acknowledgment of this valuable service.

Lord Keith resolved to chase the French to Toulon, their probable destination; but had first to return to Gibraltar to obtain Lord St. Vincent's approval of his scheme. He approved, assumed the command himself, but wasted so much time in preparations, that Lord Keith arrived at Toulon just too late. Lord St. Vincent had stopped half way, and again delegated the command to Keith. Keith found out that the French had gone to Spezzia, in the Gulf of Genoa. St. Vincent, who was at Minorca, knew nothing of this, and being apprehensive for the safety of the island, sent peremptory orders to Keith to return for its defence, just as he was again nearing his enemy.

Meanwhile, Cadiz being no longer blockaded, the Spaniards came out, and gained the shelter of Carthage. There were only the French now to look after. Inopportunely, as it turned out, however desirable it had for long been, Lord St. Vincent now definitely resigned the command to Keith; for the latter was detained at Minorca to transact certain preliminaries necessary to his assuming the command. The result of this delay was, that the French made

good their voyage across the gulf, and joined the Spaniards at Carthagená. Whenever it was possible, Keith started, having hoisted his flag in the *Queen Charlotte*, to which he had Cochrane transferred. They reached Carthagená—no fleet there. They reached Cadiz—they had passed, but were gone. The end of all the bungling was, that, under cover of night, the combined fleet had sailed through the Straits of Gibraltar, and escaped from their pursuers. There was nothing for it but to follow. By the 8th of August the English were off Brest, but only in time to learn that every vessel, French and Spaniard, was safely moored in its unassailable harbour. Keith cruised in the Channel. By some strange mishap the fleet escaped from Brest, as they had from the Mediterranean. Keith followed them again, but 1799 was very nearly closed ere he was back at Gibraltar from his fool's errand.

Cochrane was still in the *Queen Charlotte*. The vessel lay for a time in Gibraltar Bay. One evening from the deck of the vessel an English ten gun cutter was observed to be beleaguered by several privateers. Lord Keith immediately ordered out the ship's boats to proceed to her assistance; one was placed under Cochrane's command. Ere they could get up to the scene of the running fight, the cutter had been captured. One of the *Queen Charlotte* officers who commanded the barge, however, retook her. Cochrane had the cutter with thirteen men; he made for one of the privateers; he got along side and jumped on board. Not one of his men would follow him, so he had hastily to jump back. This, which, as far as we know, was the first time Lord Cochrane was ever in

action, was the only occasion on which he found British seamen refuse to follow their commander into any encounter, however perilous.

Lord Keith sailed with his fleet to Sicily. At Palermo Cochrane made the acquaintance of Lord Nelson, under whose command he never once served. Nelson characteristically counselled his young friend. He said, "Never mind manœuvres, always go at them." Nelson's squadron had captured a French seventy-four, the *Généreux*. Lord Keith placed Cochrane on board of her as prize-master. This circumstance providentially saved Lord Cochrane's life. For shortly afterwards, the *Queen Charlotte*, on board of which he otherwise would have been, while reconnoitring Caprera (now illustrious as the home of Garibaldi), was destroyed by a conflagration in which nearly her whole crew perished. Cochrane in command of the *Généreux*, met with more rough weather. Jack Larmour's instructions in seamanship now proved most valuable. The gale was tremendous, and not a man would ascend to take in the sails until the commander shamed them into daring by himself setting the example, and mounting the rigging. Lord Keith was so gratified by the conduct of Cochrane, that he gave him the command of the *Speedy*—a wretched little cockle-shell of a vessel—but still pleasing to our hero as giving him his FIRST COMMAND.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CRUISE OF THE SPEEDY—A CAREER OF CAPTURES.

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A. D. 1800—1801.

First command—A feeble craft—Objects of the Cruise—Captures his first prize—Blockade of Genoa—A narrow escape—A sham Dane and a sham pestilence—A masqued ball and a curious costume—Lord Cochrane fights a duel—Capture of the *Gamo*—Satanic boarders—A mistake about a flag—The odds in the fight—The prize hard to keep—Lord Cochrane's younger brother—Admiralty pique—An equivocal certificate of bravery—Professional jealousy—A trip to Algiers—Hunting in couples—Becomes a letter-carrier—A bonfire of oil—Chased by three French ships—The *Speedy* captured—French courtesy—Philosophy and politeness—Farewell to the *Speedy*—An intruder at the breakfast table—An action off Algeiras—The Union Jack upside down—Parole at Gibraltar—A singular encounter—Returns to England.

Now for the first time, early in the spring of 1800, Lord Cochrane was invested with the undivided and responsible command of a vessel of war. He rejoiced at the circumstance, and hoped to do great things with the *Speedy*. He was not even discouraged by the ridiculousness of its armament, which put encounters with anything but very small craft entirely out of his reach. The *Speedy* was but a brig of 158 tons, which mounted fourteen four-pounders, and with a crew of only ninety men, officers being included. Some idea of the mettle of his vessel may be formed from

the fact that Cochrane could carry in his pocket, as he walked the quarter-deck, a whole broadside of shot. Dissatisfied, as was most natural, with his armament, Lord Cochrane applied to the admiral for two twelve-pounders, one for the stern, the other for the bows. But he had to return them, for there was no room on the deck to work them ; neither would the timbers stand the concussion of even such insignificant weapons. He managed to patch up the rigging by such means as borrowing the foretop-gallant-yard of a by no means large prize, which did *main-yard's* duty in the *Speedy*. Nor was the accommodation for personal comfort at all better than the *Speedy's* effectiveness for engagement. The cabin was but five feet high ; when the tall captain shaved, he had to put his head and shoulders through the sky-light, and place his mirror and shaving-tackle on deck. From these facts a pretty tolerable idea can be formed of the almost insuperable difficulties of our hero's next enterprise. Yet, in the course of very little more than one year, above fifty vessels, a hundred and twenty-two guns, and five hundred and thirty-four prisoners were captured, in almost every case the odds being tremendously against the captors.

The general instructions of Lord Cochrane were to cruise in the Mediterranean, to harass the French and Spanish coasts, and their war and mercantile marine ; and do what circumstances would permit in the way of making prizes. All along the Spanish, and occasionally the Barbary coasts, did the *Speedy* sail, lying hidden by day, and pouncing upon the vessels which crept along the shore under cover of night. Variety was once or twice afforded by touch-

ing at some friendly Italian port, to receive the admiral's orders, or deliver prizes, or to take part in some special service. It would be tedious, and even if not so, quite beyond our limits, to attempt to give even a tithe of the numerous exploits performed by Lord Cochrane while in command of the *Speedy*. Our readers must be content with two or three, by way of illustrative sample.

On the 10th of May, Cochrane made his first prize in the *Intrépide*, a French privateer, carrying only six guns, which had the night before picked up a Danish craft which formed one of a convoy under his escort. After the vessels under his protection were safe in Leghorn harbour, he was ordered off to Genoa to prevent the introduction of supplies to Massena, and the French garrison, who were blockaded on the land side by the Austrian army in possession of the spurs of the Apennines which command the town. Massena capitulated in June; that event freed Cochrane again for a return to his favourite occupation, cruising about, unaccompanied, in search of prizes. He was sent to the Spanish coast. Sneaking about the shores of Sardinia and Corsica, he made many prizes ere he reached his destination. The renown of his successes made his enterprise still more arduous; for several Spanish ships of war were sent out to sea with the express purpose of capturing the *Speedy*. In face of this new danger, he substituted six for four-pounders; but found that even these tested too severely the capacity of his miniature and rickety vessel; and he had to remove them.

On the 21st of December, 1800, the cruise was very nearly being brought to a very disagreeable conclusion.

Cochrane saw a large merchantman-looking ship "hugging the shore." He steered right for her, but the ship, when the distance had been almost covered, opened suddenly a formidable row of portholes, which had been closed for the purpose of deception, and poured in a heavy broadside. To attack so formidable a frigate of war, with probably ten times the *Speedy's* weight of guns, and four or five times the number of her crew, would have been madness. Previous foresight, however, enabled Cochrane to adopt another alternative than to strike the English colours. The Danes were neutral in the great war then raging. When Cochrane had been first informed that several Spaniards were expressly waiting for him, he had had the *Speedy* painted in exact imitation of a Danish brig well known in these seas. He had also coaxed a Dane on board, and purchased for his use a uniform of the Danish Royal Navy. When the *Speedy* received the Spaniard's shot, she at once ran up Danish colours, and the Dane was prominently displayed on board clad in his false colours. Even this two-fold feint, however, would not have succeeded but for another ingenious device of Cochrane. The Spaniards, of course, at once sent a boat to board. And the first glance around the ship would have convinced them that there was only one Dane on board. As the boat neared the *Speedy*, the fearful yellow, or Plague Flag, was hoisted. In return to queries put from a safe distance, it was answered by the Dane that they sailed from Algiers, where the pestilence was prevalent. This satisfied the unsuspecting Spaniard, and with courteous good wishes he steered away.



Early in 1801 the *Speedy* was lying in the harbour of Valetta. In Malta, Lord Cochrane's precipitancy got him into a difficulty which terminated much less unpleasantly than it might have done. There was quartered in the island a regiment of French Legitimist exiles. They gave a *bal masqué*, to which Cochrane resolved to go. It was understood that any conceivable costume within somewhat liberal limits of propriety would be admitted. Cochrane resolved to get himself up as a fac-simile of his old friend and instructor, Jack Larmour, the lump of grease and the marline-spike not being forgotten. This sort of dress was quite beneath the ideas of dignity entertained by the beggared French nobles. They refused to admit the somewhat *outré* masquerader. Cochrane courteously, but firmly, maintained his right to dress as he pleased, and insisted that the ordinary work-a-day costume of an English tar was as honourable and as admissible as the habiliments of the Arab, Turk, Arcadian, or any other of the disguises usual at such assemblies. This, however, the Frenchmen would not concede; one of them, losing patience, collared the young giant, and was about turning him out, when he received a round oath in his own language and a thoroughly English blow. The bestower of these compliments was taken to the guardhouse. The announcement of his name freed him, but an apology was demanded and flatly refused. The Frenchman challenged Cochrane, and was hit by him in the thigh. This termination of the affair greatly grieved Lord Cochrane; "it was a lesson to him in future never to do anything in frolic which might even give unintentional offence." His conduct in the

matter was certainly very far from defensible, but we cannot help believing that the unaffected choice of the garb of his own men was a real sign of goodness and generosity of heart; and we confess to a feeling of some sympathy with his obvious desire in the selection he made to shock the stuck-up gentility of the "Mounseers."

By far the most illustrious exploit of the cruise of the *Speedy* was the famous capture of the *El Gamo* frigate. One or two of Cochrane's officers, as courageous but more fool-hardy than himself, had expressed some regret that they had not been permitted to attack the Spanish ship on which the "Dane and Plague" ruse had been played. Doubtless, Cochrane's own unbiassed inclinations and regrets both tended in the same direction. His attack of the *El Gamo* was fully as hazardous and daring as would have been the acceptance of battle in the former case. On the 6th of May, 1801, Cochrane ran in towards Barcelona. He sighted a Spanish xebeque frigate, which, immediately on seeing the *Speedy*, made all sail to reach her. The size of the ship gave the only clue to the probable number of the crew. It was afterwards discovered that she numbered no fewer than three hundred and nineteen sailors and marines; the *Speedy* had on board only fifty-four men and boys, the rest were at the time absent, being occupied in conducting prizes, recently captured, into port. The difference in respect of armament, weight as well as number of guns being taken into account, was equally enormous. The *Speedy*, as has been already stated, mounted only fourteen four-pounders. The *Gamo* carried thirty-two guns, of which twenty-two were

long twelve-pounders ; eight, nine-pounders ; and the remaining two, heavy carronades.

When the Spanish ship was seen bearing down upon the *Speedy*, the boatswain's pipe was sounded, and the deck cleared for action. Every one of the fifty-four men and boys prepared for the encounter with equal zest and alacrity. The *Speedy's* position was not very favourable. In reply to the firing of a gun, and the hoisting of Spanish colours by his assailant, Cochrane ran up the flag of the United States—a mere feint to gain time and a better position. This effected, the Stars and Stripes came down, and the Union Jack took their place at the mast-head. The first broadside of the Spaniard did no damage ; a second no more harm. Cochrane ordered his men not to return a shot till they were close to the enemy. He ran close under the *Gamo's* lee, the yards of the *Speedy* being locked in the other's rigging, and the guns of the frigate—even those of the lowest tier—pointing straight over the *Speedy's* deck, incapable of being so lowered as to hit anything but the rigging. On the other hand, the guns of the *Speedy*, which were crammed with a triple charge, were considerably elevated. Feeble as was their power, they were most destructive at the closest of quarters, and their shot crashed through the timbers of the *Gamo*, forcing their way up through the deck, and there dealing further destruction upon the crew, paralyzed and astonished by the mad presumption of their antagonist. The first shot from the *Speedy* killed the Spanish captain and boatswain. The Spaniards were not long in learning that their very size and strength made them powerless, except to blow

away the *Speedy's* yards and rigging. The second in command gave the order to board, and his hundreds of men, leaping over the bulwarks, would have, by mere force of numbers, crushed the Englishmen to death, had not Cochrane's quick ear detected the order of the enemy. He at once made off from the Spaniard, and ere the smoke of a volley of musketry from his deck had cleared away, the *Speedy* was out of harm's way, as far as boarders were concerned. This distance, of course, was attended with the countervailing disadvantage that he was again within the range of the Spaniard's broadside. So he closed with him again, and again made off. A third time he closed with him, and a third time sheered off, on each occasion repeating the opening broadside of cannon and the parting musketry volley. The crew of the *Gamo* now despaired of being able to board, and stuck to their guns. These were quick dismantling the *Speedy* of everything above her deck—the fight having, by this time, been continued for two long hours; only two of the crew had been killed, and only four wounded.

Cochrane resolved upon a final *coup de main*. He impressed upon his men the fact that, if the *Gamo* conquered, no mercy would be shown, after the annoyance they had given, and the destruction they had dealt. He told them that the only chance they had of saving their lives (and slender enough that chance seemed to be), was to board the *Gamo*. They assented to the force of their captain's argument; they needed no persuasion. Every man and boy in the *Speedy* was to board, save one alone; the surgeon, Dr. Guthrie (who yet survives), remained at the helm. The boarders were divided into two par-

ties. The larger number, under Cochrane, were to attack the *Gamo* in its middle ; a smaller number were ordered simultaneously to clamber over the bows. By the captain's orders, the latter party blackened their faces—already grimy enough after two hours' firing. The majority of the *Gamo's* crew were in the front—in other words, opposed to the smaller boarding party. But when the black fellows jumped down upon them from their own bulwarks, all the disparity of numbers was forgotten ; the superstitious Spaniards were panic-stricken. Not only did it seem to them they had to fight the English heretics, but also some of the myrmidons of their Satanic master himself. They fell back in dismay, to be welcomed amidships by the cutlasses and pistols of the captain's own party. Their courage revived when they saw faces no blacker than the smoke of a two hours' fight had made them. Here again, however, another device of the most astoundingly fertile brain of Dundonald was resorted to. He ordered one of his men to climb to the masthead, which he did, unseen in the confusion, and hauled down the colours. A shout from the English caused the Spaniards to look up. Each one believed that the colours had been hauled down by their own officer's command ; and believing that they could do no more, they laid down their arms. Thus did more than three hundred men submit to fifty, in a hand-to-hand combat on their own deck—owing their conquest to the daring of their victors, and the wondrous invention of him who at once designed and led the attack. The number of killed and wounded on board the *Gamo* was actually in excess of the whole number of the *Speedy's* crew.

Lord Cochrane had only three killed (two before he boarded) and eight wounded.

The task of keeping in subjection the enormous number thus conquered was itself a work of very great difficulty. No time was lost in getting them under the hatchways. Even then the utmost precaution was requisite. Their own main-deck guns, loaded with canister, were turned upon them; while seamen, with lighted matches, were never away from the very near vicinity of the touchholes. Lord Cochrane's younger brother, Archibald, who was a midshipman in the *Speedy*, was appointed to the command of the prize, with thirty men. The two vessels, in company, safely arrived at Port Mahon, in Minorca. To the great chagrin of Lord Cochrane, the *Gamo*, which was a splendid vessel, was not purchased by the Admiralty. Had it been so, they could not, with any decency, have refused him its command. The transfer from the *Speedy* to the *Gamo* would have been a great step in advance for him. Perhaps it was because this would have been, in the idea of "My Lords," a too great boon to confer upon the somewhat plain-spoken and petulant officer, that they refused to make so excellent a purchase. The *Gamo* was sold by auction for a beggarly sum, and the crew and captain of the *Speedy* did not make much pecuniary profit by their bravery.

After the action with the *Gamo*, the second Spanish officer in its command, who had become responsible for the fate of the ship, after the death of his chief, asked Lord Cochrane for a testimonial, to the effect that he had done his duty. Lord Cochrane, not willing to grieve his beaten opponent by a refusal, and yet not

conscientiously able to comply with the request, in its terms, wrote a certificate that the gentleman "had conducted himself like a true Spaniard!" This statement, the result of mingled sarcasm and politeness, was probably the very best for the man that Cochrane could have given him. He afterwards found out that it was the means of securing for him immediate and substantial promotion.

Certain officers, senior in the service to Lord Cochrane, who had commanded squadrons fruitlessly, or almost so, as far as the capture of prizes was concerned, seemed to have become jealous of his extraordinary and pecuniarily profitable success in command of only one small vessel. Some of these officers were either in authority over him, or at least had influence with those who were. It is tolerably apparent that, after his great and crowning capture of the *Gamo*, this envy of theirs operated to his detriment. There were plenty more prizes afloat; and after he had conducted the *Gamo* safely into port he was most eager to be at once back to the fertile scene of his previous triumphs. Unfair obstacles, however, were put in his way; and for the most of the remaining months during which he commanded the *Speedy*, he was employed in services for which his craft was unfitted—in one case, in a duty in the performance of which the small power of the *Speedy* subjected its crew to the very greatest danger.

Hardly was the *Speedy* refitted at Port Mahon, and again ready for sea, when, to the great chagrin of captain and crew, she was commissioned to proceed to Algiers, to remonstrate with its pirate Dey for having captured a British vessel. This he had done in re-

praisal for the capture, by the English, of one of his own. This, however, we had done, because it had infringed a blockade in which an English squadron was engaged. The absurdity, nay, the criminality, of sending an emissary to enforce such a request, backed by so contemptible a force as Lord Cochrane's was, needs not to be more than hinted at.

Cochrane arrived at Algiers and demanded an audience. The ministers blustered, but the Dey granted the interview; Cochrane was ushered through long anterooms between two rows of motionless, but ferocious-looking, living statues, each armed with a huge axe. Salams and ceremony over, Cochrane stood before the regal ruffian. To the rude demand, "What brought him there?" Cochrane replied by firmly and calmly stating the nature of his mission. The Dey raved, and said that the English, who were a well-known nation of pirates, had no right to take such a tone; he tried to cow Cochrane by a hypothetical threat of imprisoning himself and his crew till the Algerine vessel was restored. As Cochrane did not flinch, the threat—probably thrown out only to discover its effect—was not executed. He returned to his ship, and got safe away, although the *Speedy* was hardly out of the harbour ere an Algerian vessel of much greater strength, but of much less speed, sailed after her.

At last Cochrane had the satisfaction of being safely back on his old naval beat. He fell in with a vessel commanded by one of his jealous seniors; they sailed in company, and Cochrane was obliged by the rules of the service to place himself under the orders of the other. Two enterprises in which they were



engaged procured them one or two minor prizes. The larger share of the proceeds of them went to the senior officer and the more numerous crew. The crew of the *Speedy* felt themselves doubly defrauded. The aggregate results of the continued efforts of the two they believed to be smaller than they should have been had the *Speedy* been unaccompanied, and their captain left to the exercise of his own judgment. For he was unable to induce his senior to adopt the bold tactics he suggested in the case of both the skirmishes ; but of the diminished fruits of this over cautious policy, the *Speedy's* men again had to content themselves with, or rather, to grumble over merely the jackal's share.

Not even now did his fate allow Cochrane and his men to betake themselves to the unimpeded work which they had fully graduated in, and which they loved so well. The mail was to be carried from Port Mahon to Gibraltar, in a craft which was both ill-armed and of little power of speedy sailing. Cochrane was ordered to convoy her ; he was himself to make postmen of his brave tars, to have the mail-bag on board the *Speedy* till it reached Gibraltar Roads. When under the guns of the impregnable fortress, he was then to deliver it over to the vessel he escorted, and to return without reporting himself. This last command was a refinement of malice at once petty and ingenious. Its design was to prevent him receiving at Gibraltar the meagre credit, such as it was, of safely escorting his companion and its load. The usual custodian of the mail naturally expected that his escort would conduct him to his goal by the quickest and the nearest line. But Cochrane, exas-

perated at his treatment, took it upon himself, greatly to the fright of his companion, to sail along the Spanish coast, that he might pick up anything that appeared. He saw some vessels anchored off Alicant ; he made for them ; they ran themselves aground. To have waited to get them off would have delayed him too long, and rendered him liable to punishment, or severe censure, for breach of discipline. There was no help for it but to leave them ; but he thought there was no reason why they should be left uninjured ; they were fired, and as their cargoes were oil, no human power could prevent their destruction. Unfortunately, three large French ships were near ; they hastened to the spot, their curiosity being excited to discover the cause of the great conflagration. They came up, the *Speedy* being between them and the shore ; when they were descried, and ere it was discovered what they were, Cochrane joyfully sailed towards them, under the belief, engendered by their great size, that they were richly laden Spanish ships from South America ; perhaps, it might be, with their holds filled with bullion ! Not till it was too late was the fatal discovery made. The *Speedy* used for flight the press of sail it had put on for chase. Long oars were pulled ; the guns were cast overboard ; then all the stores were thrown into the sea ; but the Frenchmen steadily gained upon them. The pursuers separated, each going on a different tack, and firing a broadside at the gallant little victim, whenever the whole length of her hull was exposed. All that seamanship could do was done. Cochrane tried, as a last device, to cut through between his pursuers. He failed, and at last, and when all chance of escape was hopeless, when one ship, the

*Dessaix*, was within musket-shot, she fired a tremendous volley from her whole length of guns. If this had hit the *Speedy's* hull, she would most inevitably have gone down. Luckily, the round-shot only ploughed up the sea before her bows; and the grape rattled through all her rigging. There was no help for it, the colours must come down!

When Cochrane went on board the vessel of the captor, he discovered that the three French ships had been sent into these waters for the express purpose of engaging and capturing the famous *Speedy*. His chagrin at the loss for ever of the little craft he had made such good use of, may well have been mitigated by the consciousness that three of the noblest ships of the French Navy, not to speak of many vessels of the Spaniards, had been entrusted with the express duty of capturing a vessel whose whole broadside he could carry in his coat-pockets! It was not, however, the *Speedy*, but Cochrane and his crew, whose capture was desired. Cochrane's command of his first craft, the *Speedy*, was gone for ever. But England will not forget the capture, under such disadvantageous circumstances, and in thirteen months, of more than 50 vessels, 122 guns (not one of which he could himself turn to any account), and 534 prisoners.

Captain Pallière, of the *Dessaix*, chivalrously refused to accept the proffered sword of an officer who had "for so many hours struggled against impossibility." Cochrane continued to wear it during his imprisonment in the *Dessaix*.

Our hero had already been subjected to the mortification of seeing the ship in which he served degraded into a slaughterhouse for bullocks, and repository for

their hides. He had been sent on an important State mission under circumstances which made his position ridiculous as well as dangerous. He had been compelled to become a letter-carrier ; and this compulsion was attended with the further mortification that in all probability he owed his capture to the imposition of this irksome duty. For had he been unaccompanied he would have captured, not burnt, the oil-ships ; and it was the light of the fire that led his captors to his track. The chapter of accidents now placed him in a position still more galling to his patriotic and martial soul. He became the witness of an action between England and France, from between the decks of a French man-of-war. There was no help for it. Possibly, he did not philosophise, or affect stoicism, as we remember him to have innocently enough done in his boyhood. He must have chafed a little in his confinement. Doubtless, he had learned, as all strong-headed and hot-hearted men learn, and acknowledge after the affectations of youth are rubbed off, that an honest expression (at least to one's self) of any irrepressible strong feeling is as good a safety-valve to the mind as is " a good cry " to a grieved woman. Be this as it may, and it is entirely matter of psychological conjecture, whether his philosophy was for a time dismissed or no, his politeness did not forsake him. When an action with English vessels became imminent, Captain Pallière hoped that the circumstances would not spoil his prisoner-guest's enjoyment of his breakfast. Neither did it, although before the meal was finished, a round shot had smashed a wine-bin under the cabin-sofa. Cochrane, as polite as his captor, expressed his delight at the prospect of being

able before night to play the host at Gibraltar to Captain Pallière in return for the hospitality he had experienced on board his ship.

No such good luck was in store for our courteous but chained hero. The attack, which was conducted by Admiral De Saumarez, although he had a superior force, was not successful. The Frenchmen declined to come out, ran their vessels ashore, and effectually kept off a close assault by manning the strong protecting batteries ashore; although all their guns, except those in the sterns of their ships were silenced, for they were fixed aforeships in the sand.

One of the English ships, the *Hannibal*, also ran herself ashore, but by accident. Lying helpless, she was boarded by a superior number of Frenchmen. They had neglected to provide themselves with one of their own tricolours. To seal their capture, they adopted the impromptu expedient of hoisting the English flag upside down. The whole action had taken place within sight of Gibraltar, although considerably beyond the range of its guns. This phenomenon being observed from the fortress, was taken to be a signal of distress. The place was almost denuded of sailors, for nearly every available man was on board some one of the vessels of De Saumarez. The authorities, therefore, sent off boats manned by dockyard workmen, and what few sailors there were to be had ashore. As boat after boat arrived, their occupants were captured by the French. All this took place under Cochrane's eye, and necessarily added to his bitter annoyance that he was not free to warn off his fellow-countrymen from the unintended trap into which they flung themselves.

Application was shortly after made for the release of Captain Lord Cochrane. This the French Admiral refused, but permitted him to go to Gibraltar on parole. Here he had again the annoyance of inactively witnessing, within the horizon, an extraordinary exploit performed by an English captain—one, indeed, quite of the same character as his own characteristic deeds. Captain Keats, in command of the *Superb*, rushed at dusk into the very midst of three Spanish war-ships. She passed clear between two, each carrying 112 guns, ere the smoke of her volley from both sides had cleared away. Each of these ships mistook each other for the intruder. Ere the smoke was quite cleared off, they re-loaded, and delivered volleys. This was from both sides frequently repeated, the smoke never clearing away quick enough to allow them to discover their reciprocal mistake until one of the two was fired. The other ran against her, caught the flames, and both were consumed. Meanwhile, Captain Keats had engaged the *San Antonio*, also a line-of-battle-ship. This he captured—a lucky incident for Lord Cochrane. The capture put an end to his compulsory *parole* idleness. He was exchanged for the lieutenant of the taken ship. Unluckily, prizes were not subjects of exchange. The *Speedy* was gone for ever; and Lord Cochrane returned to England, covered with renown, with a strong conviction of Admiralty corruptions, and the object of the malicious envy of many court or ministerial favorites, whose very slender achievement he had so outshone.

## CHAPTER V.

## ON SHORE, WITHOUT EMPLOYMENT.

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A. D. 1801 -1803.

Promotion comes with difficulty—Too warm friends—The penalties of imprudent outspokenness—The ethics of professional promotion—Fate of Lord Cochrane's first lieutenant—Lord Cochrane mortally offends Lord St. Vincent—Who won the battle of Cape St. Vincent?—No use asking for employment—Cochrane studies Naval abuses—Admiralty courts—Testimony of Captain Brenton on the state of the Navy—Boroughmongering—Worthless ships bought or hired from Partizans—Transports in Messina harbour—Nefarious sacrifice of human life—Slop clothing and its cost—A cooper's bill—"The dockyards stink of corruption"—Robberies of sick seamen—A hospitable surgeon—Something like a bribe—Sponge or lint—A discovery in a hospital cellar—Scaling a wall for rum—"Jack's as *bad* as his master"—Lord Cochrane ambitious of a seat in Parliament—Enters himself as a university student—A pupil of Dugald Stewart—The war renewed—A ship promised.

THE name of the *Speedy* was no more enrolled in the British Navy; the first desire of its late captain was to obtain another ship. His next was to receive the recognition of his services by promotion, which he had done so much to deserve during his thirteen months' command, and which, by the practice of the service, was his undoubted right for the one exploit, for the capture of the *Gamo*. He also used every

endeavour to get a step for his first lieutenant, Parker, who had headed one of the boarding parties, and had received a bullet in his breast, and been run through the thigh. The captain received post rank, but tardily, and after much waiting and solicitation. His relations, perhaps somewhat too urgently, laid his claims before the head of the Admiralty, Earl St. Vincent. In fact, Captain Brenton, in his life of Lord St. Vincent, says: "He was so much pressed on the subject of Lord Cochrane's promotion for taking the *Gamo*, that it became almost a point of etiquette with the earl not to make him a captain. An illustrious person is reported to have said, 'My Lord, we must make Lord Cochrane "post,"' to which Lord St. Vincent replied, 'The First Lord of the Admiralty knows *no must*.'" Cochrane's own relations were assiduous in his cause. His uncle (under whom it will be remembered he first served) wrote, whenever he heard of his nephew's daring exploits, from Egypt, where he commanded the *Ajax* in Nelson's fleet. His father, the old Earl of Dundonald, was pressing in his representations. Possibly Lord Cochrane had too many advocates. Besides, he more than suspected that the authorities were not very well disposed to him. He had spoken out very freely his real sentiments about being ordered to convoy the mail-packet; and he had been far from reticent of comment on the general conduct of the war by Admiral Lord Keith in the Mediterranean. Besides, he had to wait the result of the usual official inquiry into the loss of the *Speedy*. At last, promotion came, and was thus announced to Lord Dundonald (his father) in a letter from Lord St. Vincent:—



“ MY LORD,

“ I can have no difficulty in acknowledging that the capture of the *Gamo* reflects the highest degree of credit on Lord Cochrane and the officers and crew of the *Speedy*.

“ The first account of that brilliant action reached the Admiralty very early in the month of August; previously to which intelligence had been received of the capture of the *Speedy*, by which Lord Cochrane was made prisoner.

“ Until his exchange can be effected, and the necessary inquiry into the cause and circumstances of the loss of that sloop had taken place, it was impossible with the Board, consistently with its usual forms, to mark its approbation of his lordship’s conduct. Lord Cochrane was promoted to the rank of post-captain on the 8th of August—the day on which the sentence of acquittal for the loss of the *Speedy* was received— which was all that could under existing circumstances be done.

“ Having entered into this explanation with your lordship, it remains with me only to add that, however disposed the Board might be to pay attention to the merits of his lordship, it could not, consistent with its public duty, give him rank from the time of the capture of the *Gamo*—a measure quite unprecedented—without doing an act of injustice to other deserving officers.

“ I have the honour, &c., &c.,

“ ST. VINCENT.”

We are not learned in the exact rules of Admiralty promotion, either as existing sixty years ago or now. But it seems to us that, even on Lord St. Vincent’s

own showing, promotion ought to have been given; not on the day on which the news of Captain Cochrane's acquittal *arrived* in London, but from the day when he was *declared* by the Court free of blame. And, certainly, even this would have been a scanty measure of justice, for many promotions had been made in the interval between the capture of the *Gamo* and Lord Cochrane's acquittal; so that he found himself junior in rank to men who had performed much less dashing and heroic acts than his own, subsequently to the date of his own great exploit.

His own advancement gained, Lord Cochrane's next desire was to obtain a step for his friend Parker. He besieged the Admiralty in his subordinate's behalf, with a pertinacity at least equal to that which had been exerted for himself. Parker wished promotion, but he *needed* employment; for the capture of the little sloop had left him too with no vessel. To his urgent request Lord St. Vincent made the cutting reply, that "it was unusual to promote two officers for such a service; besides which, the small number of men killed on board the *Speedy* did not warrant the application." The latter seemed a strange reason. Its real drift was, that Parker was to be punished because Cochrane had taken such good care of his men, and had prevented their deaths by almost lashing his cockle-shell to the hull of the huge ship! This rejoinder would at once have suggested itself, but unfortunately there was another vehement reply, which was so stinging a retort, that Cochrane's hot temper impelled him to use it. Admiral Jervis had been promoted, not to a mere step in the profession, but to a title, which commemorated his victory of Cape St.

Vincent, in which only one man had been killed in his own flag-ship. And not only had he been made a peer but his captain had been knighted, and every inferior officer had gained a step. The truth was, that the battle of Cape St. Vincent had been won by Nelson, who commanded in the front; the reserve under the admiral had been scarcely engaged, if engaged it was at all. With unparalleled imprudence, Cochrane, who could not let such an opportunity of hard-hitting go by, replied to the earl, that "his reasons for not promoting Lieutenant Parker, because there were only three men killed on board the *Speedy*, were in opposition to his lordship's own promotion to an earldom, as well as his flag-captain to knighthood, and his other officers to increased rank and honours: for that in the battle from which his lordship derived his title there was only one man killed on board his own flag-ship, so that there were more casualties in my sloop than in his line-of-battle ship."

The man must have been more than human in whose heart such a home-thrust, from a very young man and a professional subordinate, would not enkindle the deepest of vindictive feelings. How these found exercise we shall very soon discover. Lord Cochrane had proved himself too warm a friend to serve the interests of Parker. The imprudence of his advocacy was visited on the head of his unfortunate client. Parker could get no employment for years, and settled down as a farmer in Ireland; years after, he had the offer of employment, but was the victim of a cruel deception, so gross and malicious that he sank under it, and died of a broken heart. He was sent out to command a ship on the American station. When he arrived there,

having first turned into money all his meagre effects, and carried his family with him, he found that there was no such ship on the station as that to which he had been gazetted!

Promotion attained for himself, and every possible effort having been made to obtain it for his lieutenant, Lord Cochrane's sole desire now was to go to sea again. He had to solicit employment from the man whom he had so cuttingly offended. He himself saw that the attempt to get it would be ineffectual, and he resolved, reluctantly enough, to allow some time to elapse before he solicited a ship. He had no pecuniary necessity pressing him; for the profits of his prizes must have been very considerable, even although the peculations and sweatings of the Admiralty Courts had reduced them to less than half the amount they should have reached. This forced residence on shore became, ultimately, a benefit to his country. For his active mind—to which idleness was an impossibility, and which preferred to occupy itself with something pertaining to his profession—immediately devoted all its energies to the acquisition of information on the fetid mass of naval corruptions and jobs which had then found no one sufficiently daring and acquainted with the facts to undertake their exposure, and which Lord Cochrane himself, in after years, was the first to bring before the notice of the Legislature.

He inquired into the constitution and the delinquencies of the Admiralty Courts. He himself had been, as we have seen, a serious sufferer by their misdeeds. Sometimes their charges absorbed the whole proceeds of the sale of a prize. Once, indeed, they had brought out a balance against him, although his prize

was worth some thousands of pounds. From the not unfriendly evidence of such men as Captain Brenton, St. Vincent's biographer, we cite some statements, confirmatory of the charges which Lord Cochrane afterwards brought before the House of Commons, and which were very generally believed at the time to be extreme exaggerations.

The grand source of the prevalent corruptions was, the predominance given to political considerations in Admiralty administration. The Admiralty's first duty, as in the case of every other department, was, to act as a great agency for the purchase or retention of Parliamentary votes and influence. To this end was often sacrificed, not only the efficiency of ships and the conduct of the naval war, but the very lives of our sailors. Anything in the semblance of a ship was bought at a flagitiously enormous cost, or hired at a still more exorbitant rate, from those who had support to Ministers to sell. Brenton says, "A ship purchased by a man of influence was a certain fortune to him. (Of course the meaning is, purchased to be let out to the Admiralty.) He cleared his money in the first year at the rate of £400 per month, and if the ship was coppered, at £7,500 per annum. About twenty copper-bottomed transports were lying for three years in the harbour of Messina, without being employed in any duty." The expense of these vessels for the time of their idleness—and they only represented a multitude of similar cases—was £270,000. It would have been well, however great the expense, if all such vessels had been left to rot in harbours: for several of them, when at sea, went down with all their crews.

Goaded into at least the form of inquiry into these

and similar robberies of the Exchequer, the Government appointed a Commission of Inquiry. The Head Commissioner reported that the country was plundered to the extent of a million a year. Captain Brenton says, "I am satisfied he was under the mark, and if the consequences of these frauds are added to the amount of speculation, the aggregate will be frightful. • The manner in which the villainy was carried on was dreadful indeed. Whole ships' crews were destroyed at one fell swoop. Every ship was supposed to have a certain number of bolts driven to secure her fabric. The tops and points of the bolts only were driven, and the rest was carried away. It is probable that the loss of the *York*, of sixty-four guns, and the *Blenheim*, of seventy-four guns, was the consequence. The *Albion*, seventy-four, we know to have been nearly lost by this hellish fraud."

In other departments, such as in the clothing, victualling, and medical stores, the bribery and corruption were equally atrocious. The seamen had wretched slop clothing, for which they were extravagantly charged. The contracts were always given as a matter of form to boroughmongers. At one cooperage alone a thousand pounds was paid for work, the actual value of which was afterwards discovered to be £37 2s. 3d. "It was a common expression with the receiving clerks that 'they had not been hampered,' when they refused to receive articles into store. The 'hampering' meant a bribe in the shape of wine or other articles as the price of their certificates." Lord St. Vincent himself said, "Our dockyards stank of corruption."

The state of the victualling department was fearful.

## LIFE AND DARING EXPLOITS

Three-fourths of the supplies for the French prisoners were pilfered. Even our own sick and wounded seamen were robbed of their comforts, and fortunes were made by public vampires out of hospital wards. On board one hulk which was used as a hospital, a mere surgeon's assistant entertained officers at a cost for his table of near £2,000 a year. Lord St. Vincent again says, "I hope there is sufficient virtue in Parliament to punish great delinquents; if not, the country will not stagger long under the practice of these blood-sucking leeches." To conceal such iniquitous practices, it is incontestably proved that in two instances the respective sums of eighteen and thirty-five thousand pounds were given. If such sums could be afforded as mere "gratifications" to prevent discovery, what must have been the total gains "from which such slices were cut!"

Lord Cochrane, during his residence ashore, made much experience similar to the above. Economy had been prescribed as the remedy for these evils; and the policy of retrenchment was first applied to the medical department! Captains of vessels had to buy blue ointment and pills for the use of their crews. And an inhuman order was issued to the effect that the peculiar class of (avoidable) maladies for which these medicines are used, should not be treated in hospital at all. This was not the worst. The cost of lint for dressing wounds was decided to be too great, for lint could not be used more than once. So sponge was substituted, and made to do duty again and again in all kinds of wounds and sores! The result was as might have been expected. In many cases, the pieces of sponge, in place of exercising any soothing or

curative qualities, communicated from one to another patient loathsome and dangerous ailments. In one hospital, Lord Cochrane was the eye-witness of seven men who had lost limbs from this cause. One poor lad, in whom he was interested, had bruised his shin. One of the pieces of sponge was applied, and the effect was that he lost his leg. Carelessness, equally with intentional dishonesty, was productive of enormous unnecessary cost. In one of the Naval Hospitals, each time a stock of drugs came in, they were brought in new bottles. An accidental explorer in certain subterranean cellars, discovered tens of thousands of old bottles. The natural idea of the best means of turning such a discovery to account, would have been that the bottles should be cleansed and sent out to be used the next time stock was laid in. But nothing of the kind seems to have suggested itself to the sapient surgeon. The sick sailors were addicted to scaling the walls by night and escaping in quest of strong drink. To prevent such midnight excursions, the doctor had the bottles broken and fixed in mortar upon the top of the walls. Jack was not deterred by this very easily surmountable obstacle. The next morning after it was imagined the rampart had been made impassable, it was discovered that the runaways had pounded one part of the glass projections to dust, and thus made their retreat as easy as it had been before. Upon this, the baffled doctor declared that "sailors were as far gone in wickedness as the hospital authorities themselves." Lord Cochrane took the pains to acquaint himself personally and practically with such facts, with the express purpose of "using them when he might be able to expose them with



effect." Already he had conceived the design of attempting to enter Parliament. When he did attain the honour of a seat in the lower house for the metropolitan borough which in those days was the foremost constituency in Britain, he made himself known and felt as a reformer, and an exposé of naval abuses. We have, therefore, dwelt thus fully on the actual state of the facts as testified to by himself and other credible authorities; and the more so, because we shall be compelled to give a subordinate place to his parliamentary career, our first and chief object being to narrate the earliest and thrilling events of his life on the sea, and on the seacoasts of the enemies' territories.

Still no ship, and no prospect of one. But time was never heavy on young Cochrane's hands. He had stored himself with facts for his future parliamentary utterances. He was conscious of certain educational deficiencies, which would prevent his being able to give full force to his allegations, and enable him with sufficient confidence to brave the oratory of the ministerial benches. He resolved to resume his education, which, as we have seen, was not very ample at the beginning, and which could not have been much improved by six or seven years' cruising with mess-mates probably less literate than himself. He went to Edinburgh, and entered himself a student of the University, at that time second to none in Europe in respect of the characters and attainments of its professors. Here he was a contemporary student with Lord Palmerston; but Cochrane did not make many acquaintances. He lived in quiet lodgings, and made his books his friends. The only professor whose

lectures we know that he attended was the illustrious Dugald Stewart, the great trainer of the philosophical and literary Whigs who infused new blood into the party, and bore it up to power after its long exclusion from office during the reign of George III. and his eldest son.

There had been lately no sufficient reason for Lord Cochrane's non-employment. The peace of Amiens had for a brief interval suspended the war. When hostilities were recommenced, Cochrane at once renewed his application for a ship. He applied in person to Lord St. Vincent. The First Lord put him off again and again; the hot-headed youth at last said to him sharply, "The Board is evidently of opinion that my services are not required. It will be better for me to go back to the college of Edinburgh, and pursue my studies, with a view to occupying myself in some other employment." St. Vincent said, "Well, you shall have a ship. Go down to Plymouth, and there await the orders of the Admiralty."

## CHAPTER VI.

## AFLOAT AGAIN—A RICH HARVEST OF PRIZES.

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A. D. 1803—1806.

Appointed to command a Newcastle collier—Earl St. Vincent's revenge complete—"Exile in a tub"—Appointed to the *Pallas*—A greedy admiral—A prolific month's cruise—A noble act—"Unsaleable" goods—A narrow escape and a clever feint—Conducts a convoy to Canada—Routine defeated—Towed by Kites—Joins the squadron in the Channel—Cheap claret—Lord Cochrane and Mr. Croker—Great exploits but few prizes—French tactics—Cochrane's galley—A consolation—Cruises in the estuary of the Garonne—Capture of the *Tapageuse*—One cause of Lord Cochrane's great success as a captain—More Admiralty neglect—A few words on Admiralty administration—Cochrane destroys three corvettes—The double risk of daring—Another clever feint—Destruction of signals—The *Pallas* is disabled and returns to England.

IN obedience to the order of the First Lord, Cochrane at once went down to Plymouth. His elation at the prospect of being once more afloat was considerably diminished when he discovered what sort of a craft it was which he was to command. The *Arab*, in which he was to go to sea, was one of the class of useless vessels to which we alluded in our last chapter, as being purchased by the Admiralty, not for their sea-going qualities, but on account of the electioneering influence of their owners. The *Arab* was

neither more nor less than a Newcastle collier. Cochrane now saw that his appointment to this vessel, instead of indicating any softening of Lord St. Vincent's asperity, represented only one more way in which he could gratify his ill will to the young man. There was, however, no help for it. Cochrane must collect a crew, although the task would be obviously a difficult one, for any sailor could see that the *Arab* would "sail like a haystack." She was not seaworthy, and he had her patched up in the best way possible with timbers from vessels that had been broken up.

After a trial cruise round the Land's End, the *Arab* was ordered to join the fleet in the Downs, which was looking out for Bonaparte's projected gun-boat invasion from Boulogne. Cochrane was sent to reconnoitre that port. But as he found that his miserable vessel could not sail at all unless she had a wind blowing right on to her stern, or unless a tide floated her along, he wrote to the admiral that she was quite unfitted for the service, and he was recalled. Another duty was sought. He was sent to Shetland to look out for the homeward-bound whalers, and to convoy them to port. After that was done, he was sent to cruise north of the Orkneys to protect the whale fisheries—an insulting and ridiculous order, for there were neither whales nor whale fisheries in these seas at all. The real intent was to make Cochrane and his crew "naval exiles in a tub." He was allowed to return to England in December, 1804, after having commanded his collier fourteen months.

Luckily for Cochrane, St. Vincent had in the interval quitted office, and had been replaced by Pitt's

friend and confidant, Lord Melville, a brother Scot whom Cochrane had the good luck not to have made his enemy. Lord Melville, whenever he was solicited, appointed Cochrane to the *Pallas*, a new frigate, carrying thirty-two guns. This great kindness was further enhanced by a permission to cruise off the Azores for a month. This was doubly grateful to Cochrane. In the first place it put him in that position he loved so well—cruising about with no one to control him, and free to act upon the dictates of his own judgment and inclination. Secondly, it gave him a brief opportunity for prize-taking, and in the very richest station too, for all the Spanish vessels freighted with the South American treasures touched at the Azores in their homeward voyage.

Admiralty orders to the above effect were issued. They were forwarded to Plymouth to the Port-admiral Young. He unfairly re-copied them, and then re-issued them to Cochrane in his own name. He knew Cochrane's luck as a captor, and by this means secured for himself, in prospect, a half-share of all the captain's quota of prize-money. Strange to say, tempting as was the station to which the *Pallas* was ordered, and great as had been Cochrane's former renown as a prize-captor, he was obliged reluctantly to resort to impressment to man his ship, so thoroughly had his prestige been lowered by his unfortunate and fruitless season of idleness in the *Arab*. His crew fairly completed, he at once started. And very soon it appeared that his sullen impressed men need do anything rather than rue their enforced presence in the *Pallas*. He was only half way to his goal when he captured the *Carolina*, from Havannah

to Cadiz, richly laden. A second prize, carrying, among other commodities, diamonds and golden ingots, next fell into his hands. Nine days after his first capture, he took the *Fortuna*, a richer prize than either first or second, having on board a large quantity of dollars. The gold and precious stones he took on board the *Pallas* on each occasion, and sent back to Plymouth the prizes, which retained on board the bulky portions of their cargoes. On the day after the capture of the *Fortuna*—its name proved a good omen—he took another Spaniard, also carrying a large amount in dollars.

A Plymouth newspaper of this year (1804) thus describes, under various dates, the arrival in port of the prizes of the *Pallas*.

“February 24th. — Came in the *Caroline* from Havannah, with sugar and logwood, captured off the coast of Spain by the *Pallas*, Captain Lord Cochrane. The *Pallas* was in pursuit of another with a very valuable cargo when the *Caroline* left. His lordship sent word to Plymouth, that if ever it was in his power, he would fulfil his public advertisement, stuck up here for entering seamen, of filling their pockets with Spanish *pewter* and *cobs*, nicknames given by seamen to ingots and dollars.”

“March 7th.—Came in a rich Spanish prize, with jewels, gold, silver, ingots, and a valuable cargo, taken by the *Pallas*, Captain Lord Cochrane. Another Spanish ship, the *Fortuna*, from Vera Cruz, has been taken by the *Pallas*, laden with mahogany and logwood. She had 432,000 dollars on board, but has not yet arrived.”

“March 23rd.—Came in a most beautiful letter-of-

marque of fourteen guns, said to be a very rich and valuable prize to the *Pallas*, Captain Lord Cochrane."

The "Naval Chronicle" for 1805, relates an interesting incident, equally honourable to Cochrane and his crew, connected with the capture of the *Fortuna*. "Lord Cochrane, in his late cruise off the coasts of Spain and Portugal, fell in with and took *La Fortuna*, a Spanish ship bound to Corunna, and richly laden with gold and silver to the amount of 450,000 dollars, and about the same sum in valuable goods and merchandise. When the Spanish captain and his supercargo came on board the *Pallas*, they appeared much dejected, as their private property on board amounted to the value of 30,000 dollars each. The captain said he had lost in the war of 1779 a similar fortune, having then been taken by a British cruiser, so that now, as then, he had to begin the world again. Lord Cochrane, feeling for the dejected condition of the Spaniards, counselled his officers as to their willingness to give them back 5,000 dollars each in specie. This being immediately agreed to, his lordship ordered the boatswain to pipe all hands, and addressing the men to the like purpose, the gallant fellows sung out 'Aye, aye, my lord, with all our hearts,' and gave the unfortunate Spaniards three cheers." Such true English tars, and true British men, well deserved the good luck which still continued to fall thickly upon them. No difficulty will there be in the way; now, of "my lord" ever manning another vessel with the right sort!

In the *Fortuna* one part of the cargo was extremely curious. Certain bales were discovered, marked in Spanish, "unsaleable." This only whetted curiosity;

the sailors believed that the labels were only a blind to prevent something peculiarly valuable from being overhauled. When opened, out tumbled thousands of Papal bulls, indulgences, and dispensations. It would seem that the Mexican market was overstocked with these articles, and that no purchasers could be found. The crew of the *Pallas* flung the whole lot overboard.

The allotted month was nearly out; so the *Pallas* had to return. On the way, the good ship itself was very near sharing the fate of the *Speedy*. It was chased by three Frenchmen. Only the boldest and most hazardous way of working the ship (a stiff gale was blowing) enabled them to keep out of gunshot by day. When night fell, all the lights were put out; a cask, surmounted by a lantern was let overboard and set adrift. The Frenchmen by night kept carefully in the wake of the light, were thus thrown off the scent; and when the dawn came the *Pallas* found herself safe. The *Pallas* sailed securely into Plymouth Harbour. Each of the three masts was surmounted by a golden candlestick, five feet high, part of the cargo of one of the prizes. They had to be broken up, and were entered at the Custom-house as old gold. A short season of leave was allowed to Lord Cochrane. How he employed it, we shall learn hereafter.

The *Pallas* had returned to Plymouth in April (1805); on the 28th of May she sailed from Portsmouth in charge of a fleet of merchantmen, bound for Canada. Nothing memorable, with one exception, occurred on the voyage out. During a long-continued fog, no observation could be made. When



the weather cleared, it was discovered that the master was no less than eight hundred miles out of his reckoning. This fact was satisfactorily (or unsatisfactorily) accounted for. The binnacle was riveted with iron instead of copper bolts; hence the compass was affected, and made, indeed, of no use. Cochrane touched at Halifax, and demanded from the port authorities that copper should be substituted. They declined, saying that they had no authority until they solicited and received instructions from the Admiralty. Cochrane curtly replied that in that case he should remain with his convoy until they had time to communicate with London and receive a reply. This brought them to their senses. For on them would fall the responsibility of the detention of the convoy. The copper bolts were supplied.

Cochrane remained a short time at Quebec, and returned with another fleet of merchantmen in charge. On the way home he experimented on the use of large kites, as an addition to the propelling power of sails. Although he was not very successful, he attributed his partial failure to errors in construction—more especially to making the wooden framework too heavy; but if this were avoided he believed that the expedient would answer.

By December (1805), he had joined the squadron of Admiral Thornborough, whose instructions were to watch and harass the coasts and the coasting trade of France. Once more was his own work cut out for Cochrane. After some minor captures, the *Pallas* took two ships freighted with claret. Of this they supplied the squadron with a large quantity gratuitously. Numerous other vessels similarly laden fell into their hands.

They sent it all to Plymouth ; but the quantity proved so great that the market price fell so low as not to clear the duty. Some of the finest Lord Cochrane reserved for his own use ; some casks he sent ashore as presents. But what was to be done with the rest ? The Admiralty had the offer of it for the price of the service small beer. That is to say, they were asked to allow to each seaman the money value of his ration of beer, the wine, as long as it lasted, to be drunk instead. The Admiralty declined. So that there was no help for it but to break the casks and spill the fine red wine into the ocean.

This very wine played, afterwards, a curious part in Lord Cochrane's history. Some time after he entered Parliament, he made the acquaintance of Mr. Croker, when he was a place hunter, and before he became Secretary of the Admiralty. Croker affected an interest in Cochrane's projects for the reform of naval abuses. And Cochrane was so thoroughly deceived, that he imparted to him all his confidences in professional matters. Croker became an almost daily guest at Cochrane's table, attracted, among other things, by the virtues of the prize claret. He liked it so well, indeed, that he begged some of it. Cochrane generously said he should have as much as he liked, if he only paid the duty. Croker gladly accepted on these very easy terms. He did not, however, at once set about "clearing" his wine. And meanwhile he had gained the post he held so long. He fought shy of Cochrane, and no more presented himself at his hospitable table. Cochrane meeting him one day, and not deterred by the grand airs of the new official, asked him when he was going to have his wine ? Croker

said he would not trouble him now, as "his friends supplied him more liberally than he had occasion for." This coolness fired Cochrane, and he spoke out, as usual, his full mind. They never met again, and as long as the two lived, their intercourse was confined to the necessary antagonism in the House of Commons, between the most energetic exposé and the most thick and thin defender of naval corruptions.

For some months Cochrane did great damage to the French coasters. Some few which he captured were not worth bringing to the Admiralty hammer. Once, when he bore down upon a lot of fishing smacks, he astonished their crews by paying for what fish he selected. Another circumstance which in a most annoying way prevented any pecuniary profit accruing from his many successes, was the almost constant practice of the Frenchmen to run their craft ashore when they ran the risk of capture. If they grounded within the protection of shore batteries of ordinary strength, it was impossible to get at them. Even if it were, it was seldom possible to get them off. They were generally dismasted or otherwise injured by the concussions, and they could not be sent home unless they were refitted. Probably for every one prize made by Cochrane in this third cruise of the *Pallas*, there were five more vessels of various size of which he had fairly made himself master, which he and his crew failed in turning to any profitable account. Indeed, he himself, by his very zeal to put himself in the way of doing his work in the very best possible way, increased the temptations to the Frenchmen to put themselves out of his reach by running ashore. He

had, at his own cost, built a galley with two tiers of oars, and of a shape expressly calculated to insure speed. Nothing in the Channel could keep up with her. When she was unshipped, and any "chase" of the *Pallas* saw how hopeless was her escape from such a rapid pursuer, running ashore was the only means of safety. Although his own, and his seamen's pockets, were little the fuller for their deeds, they had at least the patriotic consolation of doing a very great deal of gratuitous and unremunerated damage to the national enemy.

On the 5th of April (1806), Cochrane having been informed that certain corvettes were somewhere about the mouth of the Garonne, went in search of them. He soon received still more precise intelligence of the whereabouts (some distance up the river) of one of them, said to be acting as a guard-ship. As was usual with him, he projected and prepared for a night attack. Lord Cochrane, we may here observe, attributed much of his wondrous and, indeed, unparalleled success in the capture of prizes to this practice. Most cruisers never thought of departing from the usual routine of sailing about by day, and coming to anchor at night. The crews of sailing vessels of the enemy, of course, knew this. Hence they lay all day in some retired nook, and performed as much of their voyage as the duration of the darkness would permit by night. Each morning they sought the nearest suitable refuge, with which their knowledge of their own coasts acquainted them. We need not say that our present remarks, and Lord Cochrane's practice, are applicable only to coasters. It was no wonder, then, that most captains made few prizes. But Cochrane took care to be on the alert, and to have all hands ready, when he knew

that his enemy had come out from its covert. Hence the extraordinary numerical amount of his captures.

Of the night attack to which we last alluded very short work was made. The corvette was carried by boarding from the boats of the *Pallas*, all the crew being sent on that duty except forty men. The prize proved to be of some importance. She was of course, being a guard-ship, a ship of war. She was called the *Tapageuse*, carried fourteen guns, and was a good seagoer. Cochrane bitterly complained that the Admiralty refused to purchase her for our own navy; and still more, that they refused a step to Lieutenant Haswell, who had commanded the attack, Cochrane taking no part in the actual capture. To a disinterested heart like Cochrane's it must have been peculiarly painful to discover that the ill-will of the officials was exercised not only upon himself, but upon meritorious officers who had in many respects the good fortune, but in this particular the bad luck, to sail under his command. We have alluded to the continuance of Admiralty ill-will, even although St. Vincent had retired, and Melville had very handsomely made atonement for past injustice. But the staff remained; and in a great department the traditions of "the office" outlive, and are unchanged by, any change of the superior dynasty. Necessarily, the head of a great branch of the administrative service cannot be cognizant of anything but the most important and general matters. He may descend into such particulars as to look after the interests of friends and *protégés*; but even if he had the will, and had a mind of the most judicial impartiality, he would find it physically impossible to see that justice should

be done to all, unless he were generously backed by a congenial staff of underlings, which was in Lord Cochrane's day, and is in our own, far from being the case. These considerations alone are sufficient to account for what we have denominated the continued ill-will of the Admiralty to Cochrane. There was another influence at work too, and a most potent one. As will be told in the succeeding chapter, Cochrane had already presented himself, though without success, as a candidate for election into Parliament. He had started on Radical and Anti-naval-corruption principles. This made him at Whitehall ten times the more a black sheep.

Two other French vessels came to the assistance of the *Tapageuse* when they heard the firing. But they were too late. Haswell fought them from the deck of their own consort, and beat them off, regretting only that the state of the tide prevented all endeavours to capture them too. All the while the *Pallas* was waiting the return of her boats. Ere they came in view, Cochrane sighted three strange sail at too great a distance to make out what they were. Most men in his position would have thought twice about the policy of giving chase to three vessels whose character, rig, tonnage, strength of crews, and number of guns, were matters of perfect uncertainty. They might be three unarmed and richly-laden merchantmen; they might be three sloops of war, whose aggregate broadsides were not heavier than that of the *Pallas*; just as possibly, they might be three war-frigates, or line-of-battle ships. When it is still further remembered that Cochrane had a crew of only forty men—all the rest being with Haswell—it will

be agreed that there was hardly another man in the navy who would have sought nearer acquaintance with the strangers. The hazardous rashness of seeking closer vicinage was still further and most materially increased by the circumstance that those left on board the *Pallas* knew as yet nothing of the success, or the contrary, of the boats' crews. All that they could know was that an encounter had taken place; that they had learned from the noise of the firing. The boats might come back baffled; they might be sunk, or their crews in chains; or the assailants might now be steering their prize back to the moorings of the *Pallas*. Any of these contingencies might be the fact, for all that Cochrane and his diminished crew knew.

It has been truly said that Nelson would have been sentenced to death had he lost Trafalgar, so hazardous were his tactics that day, so widely did he depart from all restraints of caution. Something of the same kind, in greater or less degree, may indeed be said of every great and stirring victory that was ever gained on sea or land. The daring commander of genius, unless he be himself a regal or imperial potentate, or has been entrusted with power absolutely irresponsible and dictatorial, always carries his life into action with him in two senses:—failure involves a court-martial, which may impose sentence of death; victory carries with it the same chance of falling in the field as does defeat. All such risks did Cochrane most certainly now run, in conceiving and acting upon the resolution to sail after the strangers. The judgment of professional superiors would have been—to say the very least—severe had his boats come back disabled and full of wounded men or flying from the pursuit

of a superior force, and failed to find the *Pallas* where they had left her; or had Cochrane lost many of his *forty* lives; or been compelled to strike his flag in a contest with a foe much more than a match for him even had his full complement been on board.

The one thing which Cochrane depended upon was the size of his vessel. The enemy, if enemy he turned out to be, was not to know that he had only forty men. They would reason from the obvious size of the ship to the probable force of its occupants. It turned out that Cochrane was justified in the emphasis which he applied to this consideration, even although all the others we have cited must have been marshalled against it in his mind. By various clever imitations of naval manœuvres which ordinarily require a very large number of hands for their execution—such as furling all the sails with rope yarn, and then getting them all out at once, as if every one had its due complement of unfurlers—Cochrane confirmed the natural impression as to the number of his crew which would be at first suggested by the size of his craft. This perfectly succeeded. The strangers, who were found out to be French corvettes, made off, appalled by the apparent force in the *Pallas*. With one after another of the three did the *Pallas* come within shot. And in the case of each of them, whenever the *Pallas* “chasers” in the bows began to “speak,” each French captain ran his respective corvette ashore. Any one of these might have made short work of the *Pallas* had they only known the number of her crew. As it was, the only consolation our hero had for the loss of the prizes was to return after the last had grounded, and to burn each one of



them in rotation, by firing broadsides till they became ignited. For all this, Cochrane received no promotion. He received no "head-money" for the three corvettes burned. It was withheld on the plea that he had not (as of course he could not) make any return of the slain; and he had made no prize-money, for there was nothing taken. He was not even—nor his lieutenant—mentioned in the *Gazette* for the capture of the *Tapageuse*.

For some time after the performance of the above daring acts, Cochrane was successfully engaged in destroying several signal-posts on the coast, which had neutralised many of the exertions of the English cruisers, by warning the coasting-vessels of their vicinity. That work completed, Cochrane shortly afterwards engaged certain French vessels of war, which proved a pretty equal match for him. They and the *Pallas* were equally disabled. He got his frigate out of the *mêlée* with the loss of only one man killed and three wounded. But the *Pallas* was so crippled as to be no longer fit for active service. She was ordered to Plymouth to refit, escorting on her return home a number of transports. Cochrane had joined Admiral Thornborough's squadron exactly three months and six days before he left it. What use he had made of that time needs not to be recapitulated.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ENTERS PARLIAMENT, AND EXPOSES NAVAL ABUSES.

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A. D. 1804—1807.

Stands for Honiton—Refuses to bribe, and is beaten—“Mr. Most”—Rewards his supporters—Again contests Honiton—Is returned—Refuses to repeat his former reward—An election supper bill—Solicits and obtains the promotion of his lieutenants, Parker and Haswell—Admiralty favouritism—Parliament again dissolved—Cochrane stands with Sir Francis Burdett for Westminster—His election speeches—Returned at the head of the poll—Speaks on the Address—Motion on placemen and pensioners—Great speech on naval abuses—Culpable loss of ships and crews—The *Fulcrum*—The *Atalanta*—Sailors kept from landing when close to the shore after long voyages—Salt junk, scurvy, and lime-juice—Inhuman treatment of the sick—Instances—Cochrane pooh-poohed, and his motions negatived—The Admiralty, in terror, order him to his ship to join Lord Collingwood in the Mediterranean.

IN order that we might not break the chain of our narrative of Lord Cochrane's naval services, we have omitted to introduce in its proper chronological place the first attempt made by him to be returned to Parliament—a scheme which he had entertained the ambition to realise so far back as the earlier part of his long enforced residence on shore after the capture of the *Speedy*. It will be remembered that when he was first appointed to the command of the *Pallas*, Lord Melville kindly permitted him to make a preliminary

one month's cruise on his own account, before he reported himself to the Admiral of the squadron which he was instructed to join. It will also be remembered that Young, the Port-Admiral at Plymouth, had dexterously managed to secure a very substantial interest in the doings of the *Pallas* during the month during which she captured in such rapid succession a number of richly freighted Spanish galleons. When Cochrane sailed into Plymouth Harbour with a solid gold candlestick placed on the summit of each of his three masts, he reported himself to the Admiral, and at once asked for leave of absence. To this there could be little objection, for some delay must necessarily occur ere the *Pallas* should sail again to join the fleet; and Young was doubtless in the best of humour when he learned the amount of his half flag share of the prizes of the *Pallas*. He, therefore, graciously granted the request. Spite of Cochrane's only receiving half his fair share of the profits of his exertions (Young claiming the other), he must have netted a very considerable sum. A portion of this he resolved to expend in the endeavour to secure the suffrages of some portion of his Majesty's liege subjects, and the Constitution's free and independent electors. Just in the nick of time Parliament was dissolved. Honiton was a town in the same county as the port, and not so distant but that the local fame of Cochrane's quick won riches must have been borne to it on the speedy wings of rumour. And with venal citizens, the reputation of wealth goes in some cases nearly as far as its actual bestowal. Cochrane resolved to stand for Honiton. There was already another candidate in the field, who had concluded his canvass

before Cochrane arrived. This did not deter the young aspirant. He at once proclaimed himself, and without loss of time commenced his canvass; and it took very short time to display to him the character of the constituency. One plain-spoken elector might be fairly taken as the type of very nearly all the rest. In reply to the usual request, he said, "You need not ask me, my lord, who I vote for; I always votes for Mister Most." But no such hint would Cochrane take. He was the favourite candidate. His opponent was giving so little as five pounds a piece for votes, and Cochrane's agent told him that a comparatively trifling sum would secure his return, for some of the better class of the electors had voted for him as the poll went on. Those of the venal sort, who waited for better terms, were to be had at a very small increase over the bribing candidate's largesse. But Cochrane stood on "patriotic principles;" he would not disburse a penny, and the other man was returned.

Cochrane now resolved to turn his defeat to good account. If beaten on this occasion, he resolved to make sure of being member for Honiton next time a vacancy occurred. He sent the town-crier round to vociferate a proclamation to the effect that all Lord Cochrane's voters, if they repaired to the office of his agent, would receive the sum of ten pounds, ten shillings, as a slight token of his esteem for their conscientiousness and incorruptibility. This produced an astounding effect. Lord Cochrane's supporters naturally reasoned, that if, when beaten he was so liberal, he would be absolutely munificent if successful. Those who had sold their votes for five pounds, contrasted the price of aiding in victory with the

unexpected reward, from which they had excluded themselves, for participation in defeat. Lord Cochrane's canvass for the election which should follow the next vacancy, might be regarded as satisfactorily completed.

The foregoing incident occurred in the spring of 1804. Honiton was again, in consequence of another dissolution of Parliament, without a member in the summer of 1806. With a repetition of his former good fortune, Lord Cochrane was on shore, having shortly before brought the crippled *Pallas* into Plymouth. When the intention of dissolving Parliament was divulged, Cochrane at once went to renew his acquaintance with the burgesses of the lace-making town. He entered it with great eclat, himself being drawn by six horses, and a string of carriages drawn by four, each packed full of officers and seamen of the *Pallas*, voluntary companions of their beloved commander, and most efficient promoters of his chances of success. There had been solid foundation for the popular rumours of the great gains he had made just before his first solicitation of the Honiton suffrages. Although no such pecuniary advantage had occurred to him from his more recent dashing exploits in the Garonne, the Honitonians thought so, and Cochrane wisely took no trouble to undeceive them. The citizens only speculated how much more he *would* give as the successful, than as the beaten candidate; and how much more he *could afford* to give as the captor of an additional series of French prizes, than when he was only the profiler by the riches taken from the Spaniards. The only question with them was, whether he would pay down, or wait

until after the election, as before, when, without infringing the nominal laws against bribery, he could openly indicate, in whatever way he chose, his private regard for personal friends, of whom he would have then no favour to ask in return.

No questions were asked of him, no requests made for pecuniary benefactions. With full and confiding faith, a very large majority returned him. Immediately the election was over, curiosity and cupidity could no longer be allayed, and he was plumply asked how much a-head he was going to give. To the surprise and chagrin of the duped expectants, who had refused bribes from the other side, he replied, "Not one farthing." And in rejoinder to the insinuation of inconsistency, as the Honitonians saw it, of paying in the one case and not in the other, he sarcastically answered that his former gift was an acknowledgment of noble and public-spirited conduct; but to repeat it in the present instance would be insulting to the honour of his supporters, and in direct antagonism to his own loudly-proclaimed political principles. They then took lower ground, finding that their expectations were irrevocably dashed to the ground; they asked him at least to give a public supper to his supporters. To this compromise he consented. Now the townspeople had their revenge. He learned that not only his voters, but the minority, and every man, woman, and child in the town who chose, supped at his expense. Nor was the expense slight. The supper bill, which he at first refused, but was afterwards compelled to pay, came to something like £1,200. As the Parliament to which he was returned lasted less than nine

months, and was again dissolved in the succeeding year, it must have cost him something more than £200 a month, for the time that the House was actually sitting, for the honour of representing the "free and independent electors of Honiton."

No sooner had Lord Cochrane taken his seat than he renewed his solicitations to the Admiralty for the promotion of Lieutenant Parker, who had suffered so severely at the boarding of the *Gamo*, and had remained ever since unemployed, and on half-pay; and of Lieutenant Haswell, who had taken the *Tapageuse*. In this year a Lieutenant Sibley, for cutting out, *with the boats of a whole squadron*, a French sloop of sixteen guns, had been promoted to the rank of commander. Cochrane did not fail to press this fact as the fulcrum on which he rested his urgency, but without avail, until he threatened to bring the whole matter before Parliament. This proved effectual. Parker was promoted, and employed, as we have seen before; Haswell, too, gained his step. During the major portion of the session of 1806-7 Cochrane was at sea, and there is no record of his having taken any important part in Parliamentary business.

In April, 1807, Parliament was again dissolved. Cochrane knew that he had destroyed all chances of re-election for Honiton. Nor did he desire it; for he had been perfectly disgusted, during his short term of membership, by the never-abated clamour of his hungry constituents for places. Cochrane conceived the bold design of seeking the suffrages of the electors of Westminster. Sir Francis Burdett was confined to his house by a dangerous wound received in a duel with a Mr. Paul (immortalised in Gilray's

caricatures of Westminster elections), arising out of the last election contest. Although he was so ill as to have his attention carefully removed from all public events, he was brought forward by his friends, without his knowledge, as a candidate; and Cochrane was accepted by the same party as the colleague of Sir Francis. The Whigs had for some time had a taste of power, in coalition with the Court or Tory party. They were fast losing their former popularity. For they had proved almost as anxious as the Tories to frustrate inquiry into public scandals. The people were beginning to learn that a Whig in office becomes a Tory. Sheridan and Mr. Elliott were the candidates put forward by the Whig section of the Government to contest Westminster. No more dangerous antagonist than the former could have been met in any constituency. So that the difficulties of Cochrane's undertaking were sufficiently formidable. These few words from one of his election speeches sufficiently indicate the principles on which he stood:—"A man representing a rotten borough could not feel himself of equal consequence in the House with one representing such a city as Westminster. Disclaiming all attachment to parties or factions, it was not only his wish to be independent, but to be placed in a position where he could become so with effect. As this was impossible with no more efficient backers than his late constituents, his connection with them had ceased, and he had taken the liberty of soliciting the suffrages of the electors for Westminster." He dwelt especially on naval abuses, and sought to be returned for the express purpose of exposing them and seeking their remedy in Parlia-



ment. The result was, that he was returned at the head of the poll, receiving more votes than even the established popular idol, Burdett himself. Cochrane's position was now enormously strengthened. All that he should say in Parliament would fall from his lips with immensely augmented authority.

When Parliament was opened, Cochrane took part in the debate on the address. His speech contained little else memorable than the plain and emphatic assertion of his determination to connect himself with neither of the great parties. "As each party charged the other with making jobs in order to influence the elections, the conduct of both might, in this respect, be inquired into, and that hence some third party would arise which would stand aloof from selfish interests and sinecure places. For that as parties were at present constituted, he would not support either unless they were prepared to act on other principles than those by which their present course appeared to be guided." Cochrane, in a word, definitively pronounced himself to be what in our days is called an "Independent Liberal."

Very few days after the Parliament had assembled, Lord Cochrane let a very bomb-shell drop in the midst of the placemen and pensioners, who constituted a very considerable number of members. He moved for a return "of all offices, posts, places, sinecures, pensions, situations, fees, perquisites, and emoluments of every description, paid out of or arising from the public revenues, or fees of any courts of law, equity, admiralty, ecclesiastical or other courts, held or enjoyed by, or in trust for, any member of the House, his wife, or any of his descendants for

him, or either of them, in reversion of any present interest; with an account of the annual amount of such." If he had limited the inquiry into the emoluments of the partisans of either party, he might have secured the eager support of all the members of its opponent faction. But by embracing so comprehensively all—asking, indeed, Parliament to make a clean breast and open confession of its own misdoings—to lift up the veil of concealment from a host of acts of corruption and venality—he secured the opposition of almost every man in the House, of all those who were filled, and equally of all those who were hungry and expectant. He had only this in his favour—that members felt, if they altogether declined the inquiry, the people would think that that which they would not divulge, they kept concealed because they feared the light of publicity. Cochrane worked this strong point very dexterously, appealing to the House to be open and above concealment, that it might vindicate its own honour, so fiercely assailed by the public prints; and that if there were any offenders amongst them, the blame might be fixed on the proper quarter, and so the stigma which should be properly attached only to a few of their number, should not be spread over the whole. The Government dared not meet the motion with a direct negative. By various subterfuges, and with much hypocritical show of general agreement with its spirit, they managed by cunningly devised amendments to shear it of all its force. A *quasi* return was ordered to be made. It was valuable as an admission of the principle of publicity, and is the first "pension-list" existing in our national records.

But Cochrane had been more specially returned as a reformer of naval abuses. He took an early opportunity to redeem his pledge to his constituents. He proved himself the warm friend of the common sailor. His speech of the 10th of July, 1807, in support of a string of motions, was the very first systematic and thoroughly informed exposure of the multifarious grievances by which the victors of the Nile and Trafalgar were harassed. Our space will allow us to give but the most meagre summary of its contents—taking care, however, to omit no one of its leading points.

He spoke with a wish to avert the impending dangers of his country, with no desire to criminate individuals, but solely that, from their exposure, there might arise some chance of grievances being redressed. He had to allege that vessels, under the existing system, were kept at sea in a dangerous state, keeping the lives of officers and men in constant peril. Lieutenant Cameron, who commanded the *Felix*, “one of the best and ablest officers he ever knew,” earnestly reported that his vessel should be sent into port for repairs. His representations received no attention. She continued her cruise, and went down with all her hands. The *Atalante* lay off Rochefort, and Cochrane was ordered to revictual her for six weeks from the stores of the *Impérieuse*. “She (the *Atalante*) had then been out eight months—a period sufficient to ruin the health, break the energy, and weary the spirit of all employed in such a vessel.” The state of the vessel he found to be this:—She was wholly unfit to keep the sea, and a gale would be certain to founder her. The foremast, foreyard, and

bowsprit were all sprung. She made twenty inches of water an hour! He had mentioned these circumstances to the officer commanding at Rochefort; for he knew that the reports of subordinate surveyors would not contain the actual state of matters—so fearful were they of offending their superiors by revealing the truth. “Their usual plan is to say such a vessel can keep the sea awhile longer—knowing that if any accident occurs it will be ascribed to zeal for the good of his Majesty’s service.” So thoroughly had he been impressed by the wretched condition of the *Atalante*, that he said to the builder of Plymouth Dockyard, that he expected to hear of her loss whenever the next gale sprang up in the Channel. This augury was unfortunately fulfilled, and the *Atalante* went down. He raised his voice against that most annoying and vexatious of all sailors’ grievances—the practice of keeping them on board ship when they have returned to port after a prolonged absence. The *Plantagenet* was for eight months within four hours’ sail of England. Stress of weather drove her into Falmouth Harbour. There she remained wind-bound for twelve days. “But an order existed by which neither officer nor man could stretch his legs on the gravel beach, within fifty yards of the ship!” He exposed the whole system of provisioning, protesting against the common practice of revictualling at sea. He said the course pursued by the Admiralty was first to induce scurvy by artificial means, and then wash it out by abundant administration of lime-juice, which, though it expelled the disorder, greatly debilitated the general system. With regard to the treatment of the sick, he had the

gravest charges to make. Men afflicted with a preventible class of diseases were most inhumanly, and with false economy, refused admission into the naval hospitals. No man, whatever his complaint, could be sent to hospital from any of the ships in the Channel Fleet, unless previously examined—not by the surgeon of his own ship, who had conducted the whole case—but by the surgeon of the Admiral. It was impossible that this officer should go, when summoned, from ship to ship—often in bad weather—with sufficient celerity to make his reports in time. The consequences of this absurd, roundabout system, meanwhile were—“deaths, amputations, and total loss of health.” One man, *under salivation*, whom he himself had sent to the hospital, was refused admittance, and returned through sleet and rain. Another, who was ruptured, was also turned back, “because everything had not been done to reduce the rupture.”

Lord Cochrane concluded with this terse and explicit summing up:—“The system of naval hospitals is thoroughly bad. Mistaken economy has even reduced the quantity of lint for the purpose of dressing wounds; to the ships there is not half enough allowed. Unworthy savings have been unwittingly made, endangering the lives of officers and seamen. Indeed the grievances of the navy have been, and are, so severe, through rigour and mistaken economy, that I can see nothing more meritorious than the patience with which these grievances have been endured.”

From the Treasury bench arose in reply their very best speakers to sophisticate upon these plain charges. One after another of the political Admirals, too, asserted that things were not so bad as they had

been; that something would be done; that Parliament would injure the cause it wished to promote—and which had their full sympathies—by taking inquiry and management out of the Admiralty's direction and initiation. In a word, the results of all Lord Cochrane's pains and moral courage were pooh-poohed. His motions were negatived without a division.

When Walpole heard young William Pitt, cornet in the Blues, make his maiden speech, he exclaimed, "At all events we must muzzle that terrible cornet of horse!" And he forthwith tried to bribe or bully him out of his Parliamentary position. One result, and an immediate one of Cochrane's tremendous exposures, was that the Admiralty endeavoured, by the only means in their power, to muzzle the "terrible" captain of a ship, by ordering him off to his vessel, to join Collingwood in the Mediterranean. They expected that Cochrane would vacate his seat. He did offer to do so, but the electors of Westminster, to their very great honour, most disinterestedly gave their new member "unlimited leave of absence." We shall have to follow Cochrane through many hairbreadth escapes and deeds of daring ere he again stands on St. Stephen's floor—not, indeed, until the crowning achievement of his life in the service of England has been recorded—the crowning achievement which his country rewarded by refusing further to employ his sword, and, therefore, left him perfectly free to give all his attention to his Parliamentary duties.

Westminster remained faithful to its absent member during all the term of his protracted absence.

Thereby they retained a kind of proud proprietary right in the heroic acts which each successive dispatch from the French and Spanish coasts made known to them. The retention of his seat proved, as we shall see, of the highest service to Lord Cochrane. For it gave him the opportunity of telling, in public, and with authority, his own version of the Basque Roads affair, when he was so environed with jealousy and misrepresentation as to make it above all things desirable that his own honest voice should be heard.

## CHAPTER VIII.

CRUISE OF THE "IMPÉRIEUSE." THE SPANIARDS  
ASSISTED.

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 A. D. 1806—1808.

Appointed to the *Impérieuse*—Dockyard "despatch"—Stores shipped in the Channel—The *Impérieuse* in an awkward predicament—Victuals the *Atalante* Joins the Mediterranean Fleet—Is permitted to cruise separately—Receives discretionary powers—Captures a privateer—Is mulcted by the Maltese Admiralty Court—Appointed to command a blockading squadron—Makes a strange discovery, and three prizes—The cup dashed from his lips—Sent once more to the coasts of France and Spain—Spain declares war against France, and becomes our ally—Cochrane's efforts to assist the Spaniards against the French—Services on shore—The *Impérieuse* warmly welcomed by the Spaniards—The atrocities of the French—He destroys their means of communication—The magnanimity of his present course of action—Takes Mongat—With difficulty prevents the infuriated Spaniards from murdering the captured French—Cruises on the coast of Languedoc—The *Impérieuse* charges cavalry—A specimen leaf from the records of his cruises—Affair of Ciotat—Numerous batteries and telegraph stations destroyed—A device borrowed from King Robert Bruce—Attack on Cette—Daring manner of obtaining water—A bullock hunt—No recognition of services by the Admiralty—Warm approval of Collingwood—Curious incident recently related by Lord Brougham—What the French thought of Cochrane.

It will be remembered that during the only session of the Parliament in which Lord Cochrane sat as member for Honiton, he spent most of the time at sea. Ere the *Pallas*, which had been crippled in an engage-



ment with three French men-of-war, was ready for sea, Cochrane was appointed to the command of the *Impérieuse* frigate, to which his crew of the *Pallas* were turned over. They sailed from Plymouth on the 16th of November, 1806. The great requirement made by the Admiralty from the dockyard authorities was, that after orders were given to sail, ships should be got ready for sea with "despatch." To win commendation, these officials sent vessels off ere they were properly fitted, and ere a tithe of their stores were got on board. The *Impérieuse* was ordered to weigh anchor ere even the rudder was properly fixed. . Three lighters accompanied her; one filled with provisions, another with powder, and a third with ammunition. They were shipped when the *Impérieuse* was out of port. Even the guns were not placed in their slides. The rigging had not been properly looked to, and had the frigate been attacked she must have been taken, for the powder was the last store to be brought on board.

The weather became so thick that the reckoning could not be kept. The result was that when daylight appeared the frigate was found to be inside of the Island of Ushant, almost under French guns. She was got out, but with difficulty. She had struck, luckily without receiving damage, three times on a smooth sunken rock. Cochrane demanded a court-martial, but it was refused, and the whole thing kept quiet in the interest of the port authorities, on whom the responsibility and blame would have devolved. After some unimportant services with the squadron blockading the Basque Roads, and after victualling the unfortunate *Atalante*, the *Impérieuse* returned home.

Cochrane, as was narrated in the last chapter, rejoined his ship when it became convenient to Ministers and the Admiralty to get so dangerous and plain-speaking an antagonist out of the way. He sailed from Portsmouth on the 12th September, 1807, to join Collingwood's Mediterranean fleet. He remained in command of the *Impérieuse* for nearly a year and a half. The general history of the cruise is similar to that of the *Speedy*, but with this important difference—that after Spain substituted the alliance of England for that of France he was frequently engaged on shore, assisting the Spaniards against the French garrisons who remained in the Peninsula. Once, indeed, he conducted a long and heroic defence of a beleaguered citadel. We shall, as in the former case, give little notice to his less important engagements and captures, and so save a larger canvass for a somewhat fuller account than would be possible did we attempt a wearisome particularity of detail, of his more illustrious and interesting acts.

On the 5th of November the *Impérieuse* joined the Admiral's fleet at Palermo. She was at once sent off on a cruise. On the 14th, being off Corsica, two strange sail were seen—one of them hoisted English colours; but when Cochrane sent out his boats to overhaul her papers, she delivered a volley within musket range. After considerable loss she was boarded, when she turned out to be a Maltese privateer nominally, but really a pirate, with a rapsallion crew, the offscourings of many lands. The Maltese Admiralty Court, the most corrupt of all acting under the authority of the English authorities, condemned the prize as “a droit of the Admiralty.” The

*Impérieuse* crew were not only defrauded of their profits, but Cochrane was adjudged by the court to pay a large bill of costs. It afterwards transpired that certain officials of the court had an interest in the privateer; they took care, ever after, to slake their rage against Cochrane, by more than even their usual rapacity whenever his future prizes came in to Valetta.

Cochrane was now rejoiced by his first—and last—appointment to the command of an English squadron in time of war. The shores of the Adriatic, in the neighbourhood of the Ionian Islands, were under blockade. Cochrane was ordered to supersede the officer who was conducting it. When he arrived at Corfu, and ere the term of the commencement of his command had arrived, he discovered that so far from there being any blockade carried on it was a mere sham; and that merchant vessels were securely landing and shipping cargoes, being protected by passes granted by the very man whose duty it was to prevent all communication with the shore, and whom Cochrane was to supersede. Cochrane boldly captured certain of these favoured transgressors, and sent them to Malta. Meanwhile the man who had been winking at, and doubtless, largely profiting by, the infraction of his duty, resolved to accuse Cochrane to the Admiral ere Cochrane made the first impression by reporting his conduct. He wrote to Collingwood that “Lord Cochrane was unfit from his want of discretion to be entrusted with a single ship, much less with the command of a squadron.” With culpable, but perhaps good-humoured, indifference, Cochrane himself failed to communicate to his

Admiral the worst part of what he had discovered. In the absence of any explanation or counter-charge, and not imagining that his correspondent had any private grudge or interest to serve, Collingwood recalled Cochrane before he entered on his command. So soon did the cup pass from his lips. The only chance he ever had of commanding an English squadron—till the reign of Queen Victoria—passed away from him. The reason of the apparently unaccountable vacillation of Collingwood remained undiscovered by him till some time after, when he casually communicated to the Admiral the hitherto undivulged facts he had discovered. Collingwood was indignant at having been so duped; but it was too late to turn the discovery to any account, at least to Cochrane's benefit. He never accused the man; he came begging him, some years after in England, to keep his secret, and Cochrane generously refrained from telling what he knew.

After some minor services, Cochrane sailed to Gibraltar for fresh instructions. Collingwood sent him upon his old welcome duty. He was, at his own discretion, and uncontrolled and unaccompanied, to harass the coasts of France and Spain. This was some little, though a very insufficient equivalent, for the sudden disappointment of the unexpectedly raised hope of commanding a fleet. It was not until February, 1808, that he found himself off the coasts he remembered so well, and whose inhabitants remembered him so well, commencing his keen look-out. Nothing occurred till the 17th, when he dashed in among four gunboats, of which only one escaped. He sank two, and took one with some good guns on

board. He captured, the same day, a valuable brig with a full cargo. The spring passed, witnessing a quick succession of similar deeds. He sailed over to the Balearic Islands occasionally. In Minorca he landed, and blew up a tower, and destroyed a formidable battery in Majorca. In May he took one or two large ships laden with lead and barilla.

A complete change in the nature of his operations was now caused by an important political event. On the 8th of June, 1808, Napoleon proclaimed his brother Joseph King of Spain. The Spaniards, already weary to their heart's content of French "friendly occupation," rejected King Stork, at once declared war against France, and concluded an "everlasting" alliance with England. Immediately on this altered state of the relations between the Gaul and the Iberian, Cochrane was allowed to give his first and chief attention to assisting the brave and hardy Catalonians, and Spaniards of neighbouring provinces, who were carrying on their illustrious "Guerilla" warfare against the French garrisons of Barcelona and smaller places.

At various points of the Spanish coast the *Impérieuse* was most warmly welcomed both by the authorities and the people. Cochrane's name was well known by the Spaniards. But they dwelt less on the losses they had sustained at his hands than on the guarantee that was furnished for the efficiency of the aid he would furnish them, by his vigour against them when the fortune of war had made him their enemy.

On the 5th of July the *Impérieuse* sailed past Barcelona. It was occupied by a French garrison.

Cochrane fired two mock salutes of twenty-one guns, and hoisted first the Spanish and then the English colours, over the French flag. The exasperated Frenchmen fired at the mockers from their batteries, but all their shot fell short. Whenever the *Impérieuse* neared any portion of the coast, boats full of frightened and sorrowful townspeople came off to tell Cochrane of the exactions and cruelties of the French. It was not to be expected that the yoke of the alien would be lighter now, when a maritime war had been declared against him, than when, as a nominal friend, he had occupied the country, although even then he had assumed all the airs of a conqueror. The exasperation of the populace, untrained to war as they were, was an excellent ally for Cochrane; as will be seen, he did not fail to turn it to good account. The visitors from the shore to the *Impérieuse*, however they had been pinched by the contributions demanded by the French, always managed out of their poverty to produce some cooling fresh fruit, or other dainties, to present to their new allies and future deliverers.

Cochrane learned that a considerable French force was marching from the interior, to augment the garrison of Barcelona. He was already more idle than he cared to be; for he had no longer Spanish traders to capture. And every fortified place held by the French in or near the coast was too strong, or too inaccessible, for him to venture upon its attack. He now saw a chance of doing some good. The road by which the approaching French body, under General Duhesme, advanced, for some miles overhung the sea, and was for much of its course commanded by precipices. He landed with a party of sailors, and blew

up the bridges, and at other spots masses of overhanging rock, the *débris* of which fell upon the road and made it impassable. Any party which attempted to clear away the rubbish, or rebuild the bridges, could be commanded by the ship's guns, did it remain long enough in these seas. The *Impérieuse*, however, was compelled to leave for Minorca. When Cochrane returned, he was astonished to learn that the French reinforcement had advanced as far as Gerona, on the road to Barcelona. When they had found their passage was stopped, they had collected the country people, and compelled them to re-erect the bridges, and repair the gaps in the road with anything that was at hand—the woodwork of their houses, and even bundles of clothing. They had then set fire to the shells of their ransacked tenements. Cochrane quietly repeated the destruction of portions of the road, comforting himself with the consideration that should the French pass that way again, they had themselves exhausted all accessible means of restoration. Some days were immediately afterwards employed in destroying roads in every direction, and the Spanish people, although with too little invention to hit upon such expedients themselves, worked with a will, and most gratefully, whenever Cochrane cut out work for them and directed how it should be done. The magnanimity of this course of action which Cochrane, in his own discretion, pursued, must not be forgotten. It was a work of supererogation. He was not called upon to act as a military engineer on shore. He abjured, in behalf of himself and his crew, for the time being, all chance of prizes. There was nothing gained, save the remunerative consciousness of dutiful

generosity, by his help to the Catalans, for whom, by the way, as a quick, honest, hardy, and brave, although uninventive and unlettered race, he conceived the greatest regard.

Cochrane hastened to destroy a fort at Mongat before the French should have time to occupy it. He was not in time to prevent their entrance; but as 800 Spaniards volunteered to support his crew, he resolved to assault it. On the 31st of July the *Impérieuse* was brought to at some distance from the fort; Cochrane landed to reconnoitre. The result of his observation was favourable. He returned on board, and prepared for action. The *Impérieuse* was brought closer in shore; and the Spaniards, greatly encouraged, attacked and took a French outpost. This, and one or two well-planted broadsides from the ship, settled the action, and the besieged hung out a flag of truce. Cochrane immediately landed with a party of marines, and entered the fort. The frightened Frenchmen begged Cochrane to allow no Spaniards within the gate; for they were so exasperated by the atrocities of the French, that they would have paid no attention to the rules of war, but would have slaughtered every man of them. It was with the utmost difficulty that Cochrane made the Catalans understand that the garrison were British prisoners, and that he had undertaken the full responsibility of their safety. His marines escorted the prisoners to the beach, whence they were pulled on board—the Spaniards, baffled of their full revenge, all the while uttering the most passionate execrations against the cruel desecrators of their homes. The captured soldiers having been forwarded to Gibraltar, Cochrane



sailed from Mongat amid the benedictions of the Spaniards. He had blown up the fort, planted the Spanish colours on the ruins, and presented the Spaniards with two of the guns which he had taken. The other portions of Duhesme's army, which had divided itself into several bodies (of which the garrison of Mongat was one), being stopped in the straight road by their being unable to reduce Gerona, which commanded their line of march, by a very long circuit, rendered necessary by Cochrane's wholesale destruction of the roads, ultimately found their way into Barcelona.

The Frenchmen had learned enough to keep clear of the coast, after they found what was the cost of coming within the range of the *Impérieuse's* guns. There was, therefore, thanks to Cochrane's own prowess and activity, no more to do at present on the coast of Spain. He resolved to cruise in the Gulf of Lyons, in the neighbourhood of Marseilles, to look out for prizes, blow up signals, shore batteries, &c. After all, he would thereby help the Spanish cause. For if he succeeded in doing much damage, he might compel French troops, which might otherwise have augmented the contingent in Spain, to remain at home. In this duty Lord Cochrane was engaged during the latter half of August. In these few days he destroyed several batteries and telegraphic stations. On one occasion a party of his men, who were engaged in blowing up a battery, would have been cut to pieces by a large body of cavalry; but Cochrane, from the *Impérieuse*, fired such a quick succession of volleys against the dragoons, over the heads of his own men, that they were enabled to complete the business, and regain the ship

in safety. The only casualty was the result of accident: one of his most gallant seamen was killed by the explosion of his own cartouche-box when he was igniting the train.

Lord Cochrane was compelled to remit these services. The term for which he had received instructions had expired, and he reported himself to the Admiral, whose squadron was in the immediate neighbourhood. Lord Collingwood, very wisely, simply renewed the *carte blanche* he had given before, and Cochrane resolved to remain off the French coast for the remainder of the autumn. We append a brief summary of his deeds—not because each one of them is of sufficient importance, but the chronicle of one month—September, 1808—will give a good general idea of his general practice as a cruiser, of the amazing celerity of his movements, and of the amount of “business” he succeeded in transacting in a short space of time.

On the 3rd some gunboats were observed close to the shore, off Ciotat, a small town between Toulon and Marseilles. One was a little separated from the others. Cochrane gave chase, but she escaped under the fire of her consorts and a shore battery. Cochrane prepared to attack the whole. From this he was not deterred by the appearance of several line-of-battle ships in the distance. (It will be remembered that Collingwood's fleet was not far off.) Sending his boats under cover of a projection where they were out of sight of the town, they threw rockets into Ciotat, which was twice fired; but the houses being built of stone, the flames were got under. Towards the close of the day he brought the *Impérieuse* closer

in shore, and kept firing till after dark. Next day (the 4th) the French ships from Toulon again appeared. Cochrane reserved his fire, that he might not attract their attention. But at three in the afternoon a temptation too great to be resisted occurred. A settee was trying to get behind the mole, and into Ciotat. He gave her a couple of shots, but she escaped. The townsmen at once opened fire again; Cochrane warmly responded, and did a great deal of damage to the houses. When the shore batteries left off, so did Cochrane. His object was not to destroy the town, its citizens, and their private property; but to cut out the vessels anchored behind the mole. In this, however, he was frustrated by the Toulon fleet nearing him, having been attracted by the firing from which he could not find it in his heart to refrain. He retreated, under a vigorous parting fire, from the town; but nothing hit his ship.

Next day (the 6th), at noon, he anchored close to the shore, in the Bay of Marseilles. The inhabitants were seen hurrying inland in great terror, carrying their most transportable valuables. But he never fired a shot at them. Indeed all through his career Lord Cochrane never attacked non-belligerents, except when it was absolutely unavoidable, or when (as in the case of the townsmen of Ciotat) they took part in offensive operations. Here the *Impérieuse* lay becalmed for twenty-four hours. Next day (the 7th) she joined company with the *Spartan*. They found three vessels. They sent out the ship's boats, burned one of the vessels, and captured the others. On the 8th the *Impérieuse* and *Spartan* were in the Gulf of

Fez. They landed parties of seamen and marines, who destroyed a telegraph station. On the 10th they took a battery from a body of troops, spiked the guns, and then blew up the barracks. On the same day they fired for some hours into a fishing town filled with soldiers and armed peasants. Then they landed, and spiked the guns of the battery. After this was effected, a squadron of cavalry appeared close to the shore. They had been drawn off from the town by a feint, borrowed, intentionally or unconsciously, from the device which gave to Cochrane's great countryman the victory at Bannockburn. He dressed all the boys of the two ships in marines' jackets, and sent them off to a somewhat distant point. This drew off the French cavalry to intercept their landing. When they found out the deceit, they galloped back; but they were just too late; for the battery guns had been spiked, and the marines who had done it were on their way back to the ships. The shore guns being silenced, the two ships had sailed nearer in. They gave the surprised dragoons a couple of volleys, and emptied a considerable number of saddles. The firing was continued. In the evening the only remaining battery had its guns spiked; and ere it was dark many of the houses and vessels were burned. Although there was all this work to show, neither of the ships had a single man killed.

At midnight of the 11th the boats of the two ships shelled the town of Cette. On the 12th boats' crews landed, burned one pontoon, and blew up another. On the 13th the two frigates captured a ship, two brigs, a bombard, a xebec, and a settee. On the 16th the *Spartan* left to join the fleet. From that

day till the 24th, the *Impérieuse* watched the coast of Spain, but attempted nothing. A few days after Cochrane obtained a supply of fresh water, by sending boats up the Rhone, until they reached a spot where its waters ceased to be brackish,—which must, necessarily, have been a considerable distance into the French territory. Another party landed to try to get some bullocks, for they wearied for fresh meat; but the ground was so marshy, and the cattle so fleet of foot, that they returned unsuccessful. A day or two after he landed and blew up a telegraphic station, although it was defended by some troops. On the 30th some small vessels were destroyed under the fire of troops and armed fishermen. The same day, a polacca was chased, but succeeded in making its escape. On the 1st of October the *Spartan* was met again. She was in quest of the *Impérieuse*, and was the bearer of a summons from the admiral, who was at Port Mahon. He sent Cochrane to Gibraltar with despatches.

The above summary and imperfect record may be taken as a fair average leaf from the narrative of Lord Cochrane's more ordinary, unremunerated, and *ungazetted* services. The Admiralty made no recognition of them, although he had, almost unaided, kept the French coast in such a panic as to prevent the sending of reinforcements to Spain, and had besides done much to gall and impede the movements of the French troops, who remained in that country. By the noble-hearted Collingwood, at least, the warmest appreciation and approbation were given without stint. He wrote to the Admiralty,—“Nothing can exceed the zeal and activity with which his lordship pursues the enemy. The success which attends his

enterprises clearly indicates with what skill and ability they are conducted, besides keeping the coast in constant alarm, causing a general suspension of the trade, and harassing a body of troops employed in opposing them. He has probably prevented these troops, which were intended for Figueras, from advancing into Spain, by giving them employment in defence of their own coasts."

This, it may be said, was a friendly testimony. There appeared in the *Times* of the 21st of November, 1860 (having been forwarded to the editor by the present Earl of Dundonald), a letter from Lord Brougham, the illustrious friend of our hero, and his counsel at his infamous Stock Exchange trial, in which he thanks the old seaman, only a few days before his death, for a copy of his autobiography. Its last paragraph gives, through a most reliable channel, most reliable *unfriendly* testimony to the nature of the impression made by Lord Cochrane on the French people, by his descents on the coast of Languedoc, and his great exploit of the succeeding year.

"One thing, I fear, you do not come down late enough to relate. I mean the impression made upon all present when I took you to the Tuilleries, and when the name so well known to them, 'Cochrane' (and which I cannot bring myself to change for your present title), was no sooner heard than there was a general start and shudder. I remember saying as we drove away, that it ought to satisfy you as to your disappointment at Basque Roads, and you answered that you would rather have had the ships.

"Believe me, ever most sincerely yours,

"H. BROUGHAM."

## CHAPTER IX.

## COCHRANE STANDS A SIEGE.

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A.D. 1808—1809.

A quick run to Gibraltar and back—The *Impérieuse* fires on the French in Barcelona—A strange shot—Proceeds to the relief of Rosas—State of affairs there when he arrived—Fort Trinity—Strategical points of the siege and the defence—A misunderstanding with a Guerilla Junta—Incidents of the siege—Cochrane occupies Fort Trinity—Description of the fort, and its means of defence—A man-trap—A sliding scale leading to an abyss—Fish-hooks and bomb-shells—Cochrane has his nose driven in—A reinforcement of Irishmen—The town of Rosas taken by the French—A tardy reinforcement—Cochrane refuses to capitulate—A strange presentiment—Escape from capture—Chivalrous refusal by Cochrane to take a man's life—The citadel capitulates—Cochrane evacuates the fort—He blows it up—Warm commendation by Lord Collingwood—Spanish testimony—An incident of the siege—A *reconnaissance* inland—Forty thousand cowards—Daring exploit in Caldagues harbour—Cochrane his own prize-adjudicator—A haul of prizes—A cool request—Cochrane asks leave to return home—His real reasons for so doing—Admiralty Court abuses—Cochrane's plans for conducting the war—The Peninsular War might have been avoided by adopting them.

COCHRANE did not stay a day longer at Gibraltar than the performance of his duty required. He had reached Port Mahon on the 5th October, 1808, to

receive his despatches from the Admiral. He had delivered them, and was sailing away from the Rock on the 19th. After a few days spent in cruising on the African coast, the *Impérieuse* was lying in Carthage harbour on the last day of the month. On the 10th of November he was before Barcelona. This place was still in the occupation of the French, but the garrison had enough to do to hold the city against the Guerilla parties who surrounded it on all sides. To them Cochrane proceeded to render what assistance he was able. When two thousand of the garrison marched out in quest of their assailants he hauled the *Impérieuse* close to the shore, and fired upon the Frenchmen. Most of the shot, however, fell short, and the Frenchmen drove a body of Spaniards from a strong position. As no more could be done here, Cochrane opened fire upon the citadel, which was within easy range, and succeeded in doing not a little damage. The French guns replied, and a curious incident occurred. One of their shot entered the muzzle of one of the best brass guns of the *Impérieuse* at the very instant that the match was being applied to her touch-tole. The two shots met in the gun and burst her. Cochrane, seeing that he could render no material service to the national cause at Barcelona, sailed further along the coast. He resolved to proceed to Rosas, which the French had invested.

Lord Collingwood was extremely desirous that Rosas should be relieved, and Cochrane thought that he should be using his discretionary power in most thorough conformity with the Admiral's wishes and plans, if he employed his best efforts to relieve the



Spanish garrison, and help them to beat off their besiegers.

On the 6th of November six thousand Italian soldiers, in the French service, had captured Rosas without resistance. But two English vessels, the *Meteor* and the *Excellent*, which were lying in the harbour, had so forcibly cannonaded them as to force them to retire. Captain West, of the *Excellent*, had then occupied the place, and busied himself in repairing its fortifications, and those of its citadel, which were in a shamefully dilapidated condition. It was his extreme desire to be able to hold the place; for the neighbouring Junta of patriots had promised to throw in two thousand men, and West was sanguine of being able to keep the French permanently out, if he could maintain his ground until the arrival of so considerable a reinforcement. East of the town, on the acclivity of a hill gently sloping to the sea, stood the Castle of the Trinity. Its construction was most peculiar. It consisted of three parts:—a tower one hundred and ten feet high, on the side furthest from the sea; a lower part, forming the middle of the structure; and a third compartment, about as much lower than the second, as it was compared with the first. The walls were thick and strong. The fort commanded the harbour, and was, to a large extent, the key to the possession of the town. It was commanded by a cliff on which the French had a battery. There were other eminences above it from which it might be fired at. But every one of them was situated so high above it, that the French could not incline their guns lower than to play upon the upper part of the inland tower, which

by its superior height acted as a perfect protection to the parts which were behind it, and unexposed except to the sea. Rightly apprehending the importance of this stronghold, West had added twenty-five English marines to its garrison, which before consisted of only fifty Spaniards. He also reinforced the force occupying the citadel in the town with fifty English sailors.

It may be repeated that the strategy of West had been based solely on the hopes of receiving the promised number of men from the Junta of Gerona. Without such an expectation it would have been impolitic, and a useless risk of lives to attempt to hold the place against the already once successful besiegers, with the native force of Spaniards and the slender assistance which the English ships could supply. The task of holding the place till the Spanish patriots arrived, was, however, made feasible by this among other circumstances—that the English ships completely commanded the sea, could maintain constant communication with the shore, and draw off the whole garrison, English and native, if that last resource should become imperative. Unfortunately for the interdependency of the various parts of West's general plan, it had broken down in the only particular which was beyond his own control. He had been disappointed of receiving the reinforcements, the hope of which had led him to do all that he had done. The governor of Rosas had sent to Gerona to hasten the reinforcements. His message had unfortunately been intercepted by the French. They had dextrously substituted for it a statement, purporting to proceed from the governor, that the English had

seized the citadel, and were holding it in their behalf. In place, then, of the reply being of the practical nature that West expected, he received an indignant protest against his conduct, and a demand for an explanation. West, of course, at once despatched a perfectly satisfactory explanation. But meanwhile the French had succeeded in their device to procure the delay of the reinforcements. They believed that they should be able to retake the place ere the patriots arrived. West, on the other hand, believed that he should still be able to maintain his ground until the necessary period elapsed for the correction of the mistake, and the advance of the force promised by the Junta.

The French lost no time in making another assault. They effected a thorough breach, and doubtless would have stormed, but that the *Meteor* and several boats in the harbour were so placed as to command the ground they had to cross. This cross-fire, therefore, prevented their profiting by the result of their successful cannonade. The French next attacked the Castle of the Trinity—although without being able to force an entrance; yet falling so little short of this, that West, after they retired, sent thirty more marines into it. After these unsuccessful assaults, the French general commenced a regular siege of Rosas. In this position affairs were when Cochrane arrived on board the *Impérieuse*. Just before his arrival, Captain Bennet, of the *Fame*, had been appointed to the chief command, in place of West. A breach having been effected in Trinity Castle, he had withdrawn the marines.

Cochrane had received full powers from Lord

Collingwood. Exercising this authority, he at once replaced a number of marines in the fortress. He brought the *Impérieuse* close in shore, and kept his guns actively playing upon the batteries of the besiegers. He could not dismantle the batteries which played from the heights on Trinity Castle; but, as has been explained, they could not do much mischief. After a few days' cannonading, the French assaulted the town by storm, but were driven back; the *Impérieuse* fired a mock salute of twenty-one guns. The French had so well served their guns on the cliff above Fort Trinity, as to have opened a very considerable breach about fifty feet above the base of its tower—the lowest point which they could reach. Just about this spot was the summit of a strong interior stone arch, which formed the apex of a bomb-proof vault. Even should they scale to the base of the breach, Cochrane had a warm reception prepared for them. He knocked away the roof of the arched vault; so that if they stood in the breach, they could only look down into a chasm, into which they could not leap, and the bottom of which was filled by men who, from behind good cover, could pick them off as they peered down into the darkness. To increase the strength of this trap, Cochrane had an inclined plane made of wood, and covered with slippery, greasy cook's slush, sloping from the base of the breach to the brink of the chasm. The foremost stormers, were there the smallest pressure from their comrades behind, would be inevitably precipitated down the slope, and over the brink of the abyss. Above the slippery plane of wood, strong chains were suspended, set with the largest fish hooks; so that even if the falling men

could arrest their descent, their clothing would be entangled in the hooks, till they could be leisurely covered by the muskets of the little garrison concealed beneath. To add to all these contrivances, bombshells were suspended by ropes from the breach, dangling about twenty or thirty feet from the exterior base of the tower. The matches were to be applied to these when the stormers seemed to be crowding most thickly up the ladders. In addition to all, mines were laid, to be used in case the castle had to be relinquished. Thus was the place made tolerably impregnable.

For some days the French, who constantly kept erecting new batteries upon every spot of vantage, maintained a furious fire against both town and castle. Cochrane, one day incautiously exposing himself, had his nose smashed in and the roof of his mouth penetrated by a stone splinter shivered from the widening breach. There were few other casualties. Splinters were the only danger, and they could generally be avoided by alacrity. All the while, the *Impérieuse* and her boats kept up a sharp fire on the French lines. Cochrane strengthened his garrison by sixty Irishmen in the service of Spain, who entered with great gusto into his very original and ingenious arrangements, after their quick wits had comprehended them. They were welcome substitutes for an equal number of Spanish peasants, whom Cochrane sent to strengthen the garrison of the citadel when the Irishmen joined him.

During the night succeeding the day on which he received his Irish reinforcement, the French succeeded in entering Rosas (the Spanish governor still

holding the citadel), to the great annoyance of Cochrane; for the prime end he had in view, in making the greatest efforts to hold the fort, was to secure the safety of the town. However, the citadel was still in the Spaniards' hands, and he hoped that when the ardently longed-for Guerilla band arrived, the offensive might be resumed, and the French driven out a second time. Just when the French had fairly possessed themselves of their acquisition, the two thousand men from Gerona arrived; but, as it turned out, too late to be of any use, or to change the balance of success. The town taken, the French renewed their endeavours to knock Castle Trinity about its defenders' ears. But the thick walls defied them. They then offered honourable terms of capitulation, but Cochrane refused them. A second time a French party approached, bearing a white flag. But as Cochrane suspected that they came to spy out weak points, he flung some grenades towards them, and the offer was not renewed.

Early in the morning of the 30th Cochrane could not sleep. He woke hurriedly from a dream that the castle was taken. He could not rest quiet, and got up and paced about the esplanade. He had had a mortar so pointed as to command the path which a storming party must necessarily take. By an unaccountable instinct, and in half absence of mind, he fired the mortar. To his surprise, a volley of musketry at once rattled upon the walls, proceeding from the exact spot where he calculated the shell must have fallen. His strange presentiment had saved the fort. For in a minute after the French

were storming. Had it not been for the noise of Cochrane's discharge and the response of musketry, they would have scaled the breach with no one but the sentries to oppose them, and before nine-tenths of the defenders could spring from their hammocks. In a very few minutes forty men were descried through the chasm, standing out in bold relief in the breach. They could not make out the nature of the contrivances for defence at all. They stood hesitating. They could not withdraw, for they were pressed by a surging crowd ascending the ladders behind them. One by one, they were picked off by Cochrane's men—now safely ensconced behind their respective covers; barrels, bags of earth, &c. At the same time the shells dangling outside were ignited by trains running through crevices in the wall; and a number of hand grenades were tossed over, and fell among the mass that were unsuspectingly closely crowded together outside. These did nearly as much destruction among those that were out of sight as the muskets of the besieged dealt to those who showed themselves. The French hurriedly retreated, leaving a heap of dead confusedly piled at the foot of the fort. The last man to quit the wall was a French officer. Cochrane himself covered him with his musket. The Frenchman (or Italian), when he saw that escape was out of the question, remained quite still, and did not flinch. Cochrane could not find it in his heart to slay so brave a man in cold blood. He cried out to him, "So fine a fellow was not born to be shot at like a dog," and told him he was at liberty to retire. The man, who had escaped from what might have been made so certain a death, courteously

bowed, and descended without the least haste or trepidation.

After this the French left Cochrane almost entirely unheeded, and gave all their efforts to the capture of the citadel. On the 5th of December it capitulated. All Cochrane's pains had therefore gone for nothing. And there was no more any reason for his risking the lives of his own gallant men and of his Irish friends, when the Spaniards had shown that such assistance was thrown away. He sent out the Spaniards first, the Irishmen next; his own men were the last to leave. The *Impérieuse* stood close in shore, to protect the evacuation. But the Frenchmen, only too glad to get quit of such dangerous antagonists, refrained from harassing them, and still more forbore to attempt to prevent their departure. Cochrane and a gunner staid behind to fire the mines. In ten minutes the memorable tower blew up. The explosion designed to destroy the body of the castle did not occur. The train of powder had, doubtless, been shaken out of its place by the first convulsion.

For this brave, ingenious, and *extra-professional* deed, the Admiralty accorded neither praise, thanks, nor reward. Collingwood was, as was his wont, less niggardly and unhandsome. He wrote home officially:—"Captain Lord Cochrane has maintained himself in possession of Trinity Castle with great ability and heroism. Although the fort is laid open by the breach in its works, he has sustained and repelled several assaults, having formed a sort of rampart within the breach with his ship's hammock-cloths, awnings, &c., filled with sand and rubbish. The zeal and energy with which he has maintained



that fortress excites the highest admiration. *His resources for every exigency have no end.*" A further incident of this extraordinary transaction is given in a Spanish newspaper of the succeeding month, January, 1809:—"This gallant Englishman has been entitled to the admiration and gratitude of this country from the first moment of its political resurrection. His generosity in co-operating with our earliest efforts, the encouragement we received from the interest he took with the commander of the Balearic Islands, to induce them to succour us with troops and ammunition, can never be erased from our recollection. The extraordinary services which we owe to his indefatigable activity, particularly this city (Gerona) and the adjacent coast, in protecting us from the attempts of the enemy, are too well known to be repeated here. It is a sufficient eulogium upon his character to mention that in the defence of the Castle of the Trinity, when the Spanish flag, hoisted on the wall, fell into the ditch, under a most dreadful fire from the enemy, his lordship was the only person who, regardless of the shower of balls flying about him, descended into the ditch, returned with the flag, and happily succeeded in placing it where it was."

During the remainder of the cruise of the *Impérieuse* Cochrane, without intermission, continued to be engaged in beating backwards and forwards on the coast of Spain, and assisting the natives against the French garrisons and troops on march, whenever an opportunity occurred. On the 7th of December (1808) he was solicited by the governor of the fort of St. Philcu to proceed inland, and reconnoitre a body of French. To do so would be to give

the most liberal rendering to the instructions of his admiral ; but as these were ample and unqualified, he, after some dubiety, consented to do what was solicited. Nothing practical, however, came of the reconnaissance. He rejoined his ship, and was, a few days after, again off Barcelona. Here he was witness to the shameful spectacle of the utter rout of a body of forty thousand Spaniards, by a French force not exceeding the quarter of that number. After the defeat, the Spanish general came off in a boat to the *Impérieuse*, soliciting a passage for himself and a thousand men to a port in Spanish occupancy. But Cochrane indignantly refused to have anything to do with the craven.

Just at the close of 1808 Lord Cochrane heard tidings of certain French vessels on their way to provision the garrison of occupation at Barcelona. The nature of his recent operations had prevented his men having the chance of handling a prize for some time ; and they were greatly elated at the prospect of at least being able to resume doing some good for themselves. They found the Frenchmen in Caldaques Harbour. It was only half a mile broad, and was commanded by two shore batteries, manned by the French. On the adjacent hills, too, a considerable number of soldiers were posted. Besides, the vessels were under the protection of two small vessels of war. Altogether, the difficulties were great enough even to suit Cochrane. They did not frighten him. He commenced proceedings by firing upon the war-vessels. He shortly sank them both. He next landed, and attacked one of the batteries. With a cheer his men ran in, the Frenchmen fled to the hills, and the seamen flung the iron

guns into the sea, and carried three brass pieces of considerable power on board. Matters were now clear for capturing the provision ships themselves. Ere the night of the day which had witnessed the foregoing operations, the eleven vessels were all secured and brought out of the harbour. Next day the haul was augmented by the raising of one of the sunken war-sloops. On the 1st of January (1809) a strong body of French entered the town. But Cochrane was in time to get his prizes and the *Impérieuse* out of harm's way. Long ere this, Cochrane, disgusted at the fearful peculations of the Admiralty Courts in their settlements of the prize accounts of himself and his men, had taken the law into his own hands. Prizes and their cargoes were offered for sale at the nearest spot. Any price that was offered was accepted. The proceeds, and any bullion or coin that was on board, were at once equitably and publicly shared on the deck of his vessel; each man had his fair quota paid without deduction—the regular sum due by the regulations of the service to the admiral of the station having been first set aside, to be forwarded at the first opportunity. We shall afterwards see that Cochrane gave much attention to getting up a case—representing as he did the cause of the whole fleet—against the English officials at Malta, with the purpose of laying the whole matter before Parliament. The bitterness of the resistance against him was much augmented by the anger of the accused against him for having in the above summary manner removed from their reach so many of the prizes of the most successful prize-captor in the Mediterranean.

A few days after the above event, Cochrane landed

a body of marines to look after a strong French force which was marching along the coast. They were too many for him, and it tasked all his energies to get his men into the boats before they should fall into the enemy's hands. He steered the *Impérieuse* out of range. Unexpectedly, after midnight, a boat came alongside. It contained a letter from the colonel of the regiment on shore, coolly requesting from Cochrane some bottles of rum! His impudent correspondent told him that he and his men were Switzers. Cochrane sent him the rum, accompanied, as it were by way of invoice, with a note containing his unqualified personal opinion of the conduct of citizens of an illustrious free country like Helvetia fighting for the sake of gain, under the flag of a tyrant, their own enslaver, and the curse of Europe.

On the 30th of January Cochrane joined the squadron off Minorca. He at once wrote home for leave of absence, and permission to return to England. He urged the state of his health as his plea. He had been incessantly engaged for nearly two years. He had other and stronger reasons influencing his own mind. He longed to bring before Parliament his quite representative experience of the Admiralty Courts in foreign stations; and to show to legislators ignorant of the facts, that a direct and most cogent premium was held out against the attempts of naval officers to capture ships, which seldom put much in their pockets; often nothing, after the iniquitous charges were defrayed; and just as frequently brought them into debt—the representation being made that the costs attendant upon the realisation of their value more than amounted to what the vessel

and cargo fetched! This, indeed, was the main cause of the departure by Cochrane, in the latter part of his late cruise, from his old practice. He found out that he could do as much service to his country by operating on shore as by making prizes; and he had no desire to risk his men's lives that the Malta Proctor, Marshal, and Admiralty auctioneer, might be enriched. Various circumstances, we may mention, prevented him constituting himself his own Admiralty Court in the way we have explained above, except in the case of prizes of minor importance. Even with regard to them, he acted against strict rule; he had to keep his own counsel, and to instruct his men to keep theirs. The connivance of the admiral was more difficult to secure; and he knew that the Malta delinquents had a pretty correct idea of what he was doing. For he had to make reports of all he did, and everything he took, to the authorities—reports which the harpies, by hook or by crook, no doubt managed to possess themselves of.

But the grand motive of Cochrane's wish to return to England yet remains to be added. Lord Chatham strove to confine the region of the Seven Years' War to the foreign possessions of France, and abstained from sending troops to the Continent until the necessities of our great Prussian ally, and of Hanover, rendered the undesirable course indispensable. With equal ardour and conviction did Cochrane wish to impress upon the home authorities the enormously increased efficacy and economy of conducting the war then raging just in the way—but, of course, on a much larger scale—in which he had conducted the services of the *Speedy*, the *Pallas*, and the *Impérieuse*. He

longed to be at home to divulge the results of his experience; to impress upon the Government—and, if they heeded not his advice, upon the Parliament—the fatal folly of attempting to carry on the war by land. All he wished was a few frigates, *carte blanche* as to where he took them and what he did with them, and he would engage to prevent a single soldier leaving France, either by the Bay of Biscay or by the Gulf of Lyons, with the purpose of landing in the Spanish Peninsula. Did he have his will, and were a few other men engaged in the same way, he believed that at a mere bagatelle of cost to the country every French fighting man (save those in central Europe, with Napoleon,) would be kept at home for purposes of protection. He proposed no expensive and complete blockade of the coast, but merely such celerity of motion, and apparent ubiquitousness of presence, as to make every French coaster and other trader tremble for fear of capture. A few vessels only were wanted to take possession of various French islands commanding the coast, such as Oleron, Rhé, &c. By pursuing this policy, Cochrane maintained till his dying day, the retreat and sad fate of Sir John Moore—nay, the whole Peninsular War—would have been avoided, and England would have been richer to-day by some hundreds of millions now sunk in the National Debt—the cost of six years' fighting in the Peninsula, from the landing of the Light Division till the battle of Toulouse.

## CHAPTER X.

THE BASQUE ROADS—COCHRANE'S PLAN OF  
ATTACK.

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A. D. 1809.

The war flags—Unpopularity of the Ministry, and discontent of the people—Napoleon at the zenith of his power—The Ministry wish a bold stroke to be struck, and turn to Cochrane—*Resumé* of Lord Gambier's position—The French break the blockade of several ports, and concentrate their fleet off the Isle of Aix—Gambier blockades them at the mouth of the Charente—Gambier and every one else consulted by the Admiralty, are against an attack by fire-ships—The arduousness of the enterprise, as thrust upon Cochrane—The risks he ran—Danger of professional jealousy—Cochrane details his plans to Lord Mulgrave—Long refuses to undertake personally their execution; but is persuaded against his will—Distinctive nature of the plan—Attack to be made by fire and explosive ships—That to be followed up by a regular attack by the whole fleet—His dependence upon the moral effect of panic—Psychological aspect of his usual strategy—The points on the settlement of which the whole question of the subsequent failure of the attack turns—Lord Gambier declines all responsibility—Recapitulation.

THE war with France was going on most unfavourably. We were suffering no reverses, but nothing was being done. Napoleon was master of Italy, Austria and Prussia were humbled. Our only recent achievement was the capture of the Danish fleet, and

that act had driven Russia into an alliance with France. The era of our great naval victories was gone. The era of our land triumphs had hardly dawned; we had as yet done little more than gain the victory which cost Abercrombie's life. The people, hardened with war taxation, and compelled to submit to the suspension of their old liberties, were in a state of dangerous discontent. The Ministry were unpopular in the extreme, and galled by an indignant and powerful opposition. Their whole desire was to redeem their credit by some great achievement, which should shed its lustre on themselves, and restore their popularity. In the crisis into which their own lethargy and jobbery had plunged them, they at once thought of Cochrane. For all that he had done in the *Impérieuse*, he had received no reward; his name had hardly once appeared in the *Gazette*. But they flew to him as the man most likely to serve them, and remove the gloom which surrounded them. The *Impérieuse* arrived at Plymouth in the middle of March, 1809. Immediately his arrival was notified to the Admiralty, the Board at once opened communication with him. To enable the duty which they invited him to undertake to be understood, a brief recital of the existing circumstances will be necessary.

Lord Gambier commanded the Channel fleet. It had become notorious that with all the enormous number of vessels afloat (almost a thousand, of all sizes), the French coasting trade went on almost as was usual in time of peace. Nay, even our West Indian residents and traders entertained a perfect panic of apprehension lest a powerful French fleet should run the



gauntlet of our ships, and, with hostile intent, make its way across the Atlantic. The Admiralty had clumsily and hastily roused itself from its careless inactivity. Lord Gambier was commanded to blockade strictly the French fleet lying at Brest. They had, however, managed to escape. While Gambier was anxiously sailing hither and thither to endeavour to discover whither they had gone, sending one ship to Madeira, another into the Mediterranean, and so on—the Brest squadron had, unnoticed, broken the blockades at L'Orient and Rochefort, and in the Basque Roads. The large number of ships, formed by the junction of these four squadrons, now lay near the Isle of Aix, in the estuary of the Charente, and a little further south than the Basque Roads strictly so called—although the expression was afterwards made to extend to the upper part of the estuary. Hence they were prepared to start for the West Indies; but Gambier, by this time knowing where they were, had collected all his fleet to intercept them at the mouth of the estuary of the Charente, in the Basque Roads, strictly so called. Thus the two fleets lay when Cochrane arrived in England. The Admiralty had consulted Gambier as to the advisability of making a bold dash, by fire-ships, at the French fleet. He had reported strongly against that course. So also had every other naval officer whom the Board had consulted. But they, and the Ministry of whom they were the nominees, were in daily danger of the termination of their official lives. Nothing but a bold stroke—a great and decisive victory—could save them. They knew exactly Cochrane's qualities; they resolved to use every means to make him the

instrument of their resuscitation to popularity. At the same time they intended to take care to make themselves safe, whatever occurred. Their programme, in a word, was to engage Cochrane in a headstrong and hazardous feat, the credit of which, if it succeeded, they would take to themselves; but if it failed, and especially if with much loss of life and national property, they would so arrange as to throw the whole brunt of the responsibility on their agent. In the worst issue, then, they would stand no worse with the people than they had done before. In the other and the more fortunate contingency, they hoped to recover their old position. They wished Cochrane to stake, on one perilous event, the whole professional reputation he had at so much pains, and through so many difficulties, won. They wished their keen political opponent, the victim of their disfavour and revenge, to win for them a new lease of power, at the possible, and by no means unlikely, risks, of thorough professional ruin, of the complete shutting out of himself from all further employment, of the execration and hate of the populace. Nay, death by court-martial for the failure of an enterprise where success was possible only to the highest genius, coupled with the most accurate judgment, was very far from an improbable contingency. For the people were in the precise humour to cry for a victim. The existing Ministry were no worthier men than those who, sixty years before, had permitted the sacrifice of Byng for falsely alleged cowardice. It is no want of historic charity to say that the Ministry, had the mob raised a similar cry for blood, would, without much compunction, have sacrificed Cochrane, if a packed

court could be got (and in that there was no great difficulty) to find him guilty of improvident hardihood and lavish risk of lives.

Scarcely was the *Impériceuse* in Plymouth harbour, when Cochrane received a letter from one of the Lords of the Admiralty, administering some flattering (but never officially expressed) compliments for his recent deeds, by way of introduction; and plumply telling him that the Admiralty intended at once to send him on "an undertaking of great moment against Rochefort." The letter, ambiguous and merely introductory to further details as it was, greatly elated Cochrane. At last he thought the ban was removed from him, and he had a prospect of fair play for the future. Hardly had he finished revolving what might be in store, when he was summoned to London. He presented himself to the First Lord, Lord Mulgrave. The latter at once asked Cochrane if he thought the French fleet at Aix could be destroyed; stating that Gambier was against the attack. All other officers, too, to whom the Admiralty had appealed, thought the scheme of their destruction by fire-ships was impossible. Mulgrave went on to say that as Cochrane had been employed in these waters (when the *Pallas* was disabled), and knew the soundings, &c., and that as it was rumoured that he had formerly talked about certain vulnerable points, and a plan of attack, he should like to be informed of the nature of the said scheme. Any plan, he added, thought Lord Gambier, involving the use of fire-ships, was "a horrible mode of warfare" . . . "hazardous, if not desperate." The position of Cochrane was thus, as will be clearly seen, most un-

pleasant; he was eagerly invited to express a judgment which would unintentionally commit him as the condemner and contemner of the judgment of the officer to whom was entrusted the supreme control of whatever operations might be undertaken. Cochrane prudently and pertinently pointed this out; as also, that by expressing a contrary view to what was admitted to be the unanimous opinion of all who had been consulted, he would make every man of them his enemy, and enlist their interests against his success. Mulgrave speciously rejoined that scruples based on professional etiquette were, in the crisis, out of the question; that the interest of the service, and how best to cripple the enemy, were the only considerations that ought to have weight with any servant of his Majesty. After this strong representation, so well fitted to overcome his scruples, Cochrane had no other course open than to detail the particulars of his plan. Its main feature, we may here—though somewhat prematurely—remark, was that the attack should be made by fire-ships (that is, ships ignited, but without explosive combustibles); but that a certain number of the fire-ships should be explosive vessels, filled to the brim with powder, shells, and grenades. After one or more of these burst near or among the French vessels, the French would infer that *all the fire-ships* were of the same explosive character; or, at least, if they did not believe that all were so, they would have no means of determining which were and which were not. What may be called psychological views entered largely into Lord Cochrane's plans. He credited himself, in estimating the rela-

tive strength of his own and his opponents' forces, with any alarmed state of mind which he could by any means inspire to the enemy. In this case, for example, as he clearly showed, although every ship would not produce the actual effects of an explosive fire-ship, every one would produce the moral effect, or panic, inspired by the apprehended vicinity of a miniature volcano which might go off and spread destruction at any moment. The actual result of this state of mind would be two-fold. In the first place, the French would be afraid to board any of the inexplusive fire-ships, to put a stop to the conflagration. If they were not led to entertain the belief that there was at least a possibility that each mass of flames was the vehicle of explosive materials, they would not be afraid to board, to cut away the burning masts, rigging, &c. Their perfect power to do this, and their likelihood of using that power, were the grounds on which the officers who had already been consulted would not recommend the use of fire-ships. And Lord Cochrane told Lord Mulgrave that *from their point of view* he agreed with them and with Lord Gambier. *Mere* fire-ships, he believed, would be ineffectual.

The second result, of a character favourable to the English, arising from the conduct of the attack by fire-ships *believed to be explosive*, would be, not only that the French officers would refrain from boarding, but that the French ships would try to give the widest berth to their fearful and feared assailants. In all probability, as the channel where the French fleet lay was narrow, and as, consequently, even the furthest distance that could be attained would not be

sufficient to make the ships safe—they would be paralysed, would be only too glad to run their ships aground, and to escape to the land themselves. These two specific results, then, would be attained by the adoption of this plan. The mere fire-ships, not being boarded, would drift wherever wind and tide guided, and would thus not be rendered of no effect, as would be the case were there no fear of explosion; they would therefore do the full extent of damage possible (thus disarming the objection of the other advisers); and the French fleet would be so placed as to be an easy victim of attack to the fleet. The latter was involved as an integral part of Cochrane's plan. To call it an integral part of Lord Cochrane's plan is, indeed, not to say half enough. It was the crowning and chief part of his plan, to which the other was merely preliminary. The plan of explosive and *quasi* explosive fire-ships was indeed useless except for purposes of a momentary, and soon to be recovered from, and laughed at, terror; unless it were immediately followed by the essential and stipulated course of a regular attack on the vessels (whether stranded, as was probable, or no) by the whole fleet. We have thus, at detail, explained the real nature of Cochrane's plan, in order that, when we have forthwith to record the mode of execution, the narrative may proceed with quick consecutiveness, without being marred and interrupted by parentheses of explanation, comment, or recapitulation. We shall then trust to our readers' recollection of the plan as it existed in its complete proportions in Lord Cochrane's brain, and merely relate how the scheme, or rather a part of it, was worked out; not at any

length obtruding the contrast, which any reader can make for himself, between the scheme as conceived and the scheme as executed. Neither shall we dwell with any prolixity upon the voluminous answer to the question—in which the gist of the whole point raised by the subsequent court-martial is contained—“Was it Lord Cochrane, or some one else; and if so, who—that was responsible for the discrepancy between the scheme as conceived and the scheme as partially executed?” It may not be unnecessary—and, at least, it is an error on the safe side—to repeat finally, and in a word, what the plan really was.

It was twofold. The French fleet was, first, to be by night dispersed, and, if possible, stranded, by the means mentioned. This was the means to lead up to, second, the crowning and final act—the attack of the paralysed fleet, by day-light, and on *the following day*, by the whole fleet under the command of Lord Gambier.

To resume our narrative: As far as we have yet gone, Cochrane had, in the first instance, only divulged his plan; he had not consented personally to superintend and conduct its execution. How he was induced to consent to this too, is a very long story, but not necessary for our purpose to be told at any length. Not necessary, indeed, to be told at all, but that the envious and unjust charge was afterwards made—that he had “thrust himself” into the duty, although so many officers many years senior to himself commanded ships in the fleet in the Basque Roads. After many solicitations, which were steadily refused, on the ground of not wishing even to seem to take the position due to others, Mulgrave at last ex-

torted from Cochrane a promise that he would conduct the attack himself. He was ordered to join the *Impérieuse* at once. Mulgrave would "make it all right with Lord Gambier." He would also so "manage it with Lord Gambier that the *amour propre* of the fleet should be satisfied." Anything, in a word, was lavishly promised and undertaken that would induce him to go. We shall see ere long how the promises were kept. Instructions were instantly written to Lord Gambier, defining authoritatively Cochrane's position in the transaction; and he had *carte blanche* with regard to all the articles he required for the task. Gambier replied in terms in which he unequivocally refused all personal responsibility for the result, but, at the same time, undertaking to see the Admiralty's orders executed, and Lord Cochrane's wishes carried out, as far as the latter came within his province. It cannot be too distinctly remembered that Lord Gambier declined all responsibility in the matter. Therefore, whatever was the upshot, he had no fair right to praise, and was not justly amenable to blame.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE ACTION IN THE BASQUE ROADS.

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A. D. 1809.

Arrives at the Basque Roads—His warm reception—An admiral inopportunely preaches—Defective soundings—Cochrane repairs the deficiencies—Chief particulars on which the feasibility of his enterprise depended—Points of strategical difference between Cochrane and Gambier—The agents of attack and defence—A gigantic boom—Cochrane fires the explosive vessel—The explosion—The boom shattered—Narrow escape of Cochrane and his volunteers—A mountain of water—Bad management of the fire-ships—Tremendous panic among the French—Discoveries of the dawn—"Signal" correspondence of the admiral—"Very good!"—Gambier declines to support—Cochrane attacks single-handed—Losses of the French—Slender assistance at last afforded—Cochrane recalled and superseded—An angry discussion—He is sent to England with despatches.

His reluctant resolution once made, Lord Cochrane lost no time in unnecessary delay. He started in the *Impérieuse* at once. He arrived on the 3rd of April. Lord Gambier, who was personally a most estimable and conscientious man, received him most kindly. But he received no friendly greeting from any other commanding officer in the fleet. Most were his seniors, and his anticipations of their jealousy were more than confirmed by the fact. The

common feeling was, "Why could we not have done this as well as Lord Cochrane?" One was so outspoken as to threaten to throw up his commission if Cochrane were permitted to carry out his project. Lord Gambier could only reply, that he had nothing to do in the matter; that the Admiralty's appointment of Lord Cochrane was peremptory and final. Lord Gambier, rather than Cochrane, was the victim of the ire of the fleet. The officers now discovered that it was not Cochrane's fault that he had been appointed to the service which each thought was his own by right—at least, in preference to Cochrane. Gambier, on the other hand, was not popular. He, from the best of motives, but most inopportunately, withdrew the sailors from duties so urgent just before an expected engagement, that he might give them religious instruction; and he compelled every captain to become a tract-distributor among his crew. There were other and more important grounds for the general dissatisfaction. Gambier had not been half careful enough in taking soundings of the Channel and its shoals; and his general reputation was that of a commander not half vigilant and energetic enough for the exigencies of the position. Indeed, but for soundings which Cochrane had himself taken when in command of the *Pallas*, he could have obtained no information from the officers of the fleet. And an immense waste of time would have been caused by what would then have been the necessity of taking soundings afresh.

Cochrane saw that he must depend upon himself. He commenced to reconnoitre. His discoveries bore out his former opinions. In five respects, especially, were the results of his investigations important. He

found that there was a clear entrance channel two miles wide, without any shoal or other hindrance, by which the British fleet might advance to attack stranded ships. Second, inside this channel there was a spacious anchorage, where line-of-battle ships could not only float, but could operate with effect against the enemy's fleet, even as it lay in its scatheless and undisturbed state, before (what ought to have been merely) the preliminary night attack. Thirdly, there was, still further up the stream, a second anchorage, to which any English ship disabled by the enemy might have retired. Fourthly, there was between these two excellent anchorages neither shoal nor any other danger. Lastly, the batteries in the various Isles of Aix were no obstacle. There was enough sea room to keep out of their range. Beyond that, the very existence of the batteries was quite neutralised by the circumstance that the advancing British fleet could steer so as to keep the French ships between the batteries and themselves.

The importance of these points is derived from their bearing, not upon Cochrane's own night attack, but upon the day attack, which might have succeeded, but which Gambier declined to make. He said that he did not do so, because there were certain obstacles. In fact, he gave the direct negative to the five allegations based upon the above five results of Cochrane's *reconnaissance*, especially insisting that the channel of entrance was far short of two miles wide, and that the batteries of Aix and the other isles were formidable. It was on these grounds that he justified his refusal to attack. It was on the converse grounds—now confirmed beyond a doubt—that

Cochrane maintained that Gambier ought to have attacked.

When Cochrane's investigations were completed, he solicited permission from Lord Gambier to proceed to work at once. It was granted, but after many delays, on grounds more or less frivolous. At last the 11th of April was fixed for the night attack. The *Impérieuse* anchored about three miles and a half from a monstrous boom, the apex of which was formed by two converging lines, each about half a mile long, and which formed the first line of the French defence. Gambier, with the fleet, lay about ten miles to the rear of the *Impérieuse*. Cochrane was supported by four frigates, which were to receive the crews of the fire-ships when they returned in their boats. There were but two explosive vessels. Cochrane, his brother, and Lieutenant Bissel, with a boat's crew of four volunteer seamen, were to guide one explosive vessel up the river. The other was towed to the *Impérieuse*; the same volunteer party were to return for her, after the first was fired. There were in all twenty fire ships. They were to sail forward after the first explosion.

Such were the means of attack. As for the enemies' defence, there was, first, as we have said, a colossal boom of spars, strongly riveted together and moored by strong cables of iron. Behind this lay certain guard ships and other French vessels, forming the advanced guard of the body of the French fleet, which was so, disposed further up the river, as to present the smallest and most compact front to the enemy.

On the night of the attack the wind was high and shrill, and the sea rough. But the wind blew right

on to the stern of the *Impérieuse* and her consorts. Nothing now remains but to tell the story of the feat, which we may do all the more briefly that the reader has been informed with such full detail of the nature of the plan, and of the forces and resources of the combatants. The anchor of the first explosive vessel was heaved. Cochrane, having first signalled the fire-ships to "proceed on service," steered her up the river. The darkness made any surmise as to locality and distance little else than guess work. When Cochrane thought he had gone far enough in his wild and terrible voyage, he ordered his men into the gig, remaining himself on board to discharge the perilous office of firing the fuse. He at once leaped into his gig from a port-hole. His men pulled for very life. The wind, which had so favoured the vessel's advance, equally retarded their return. Fifteen minutes had been calculated as the interval between the firing of the fuse and the explosion. The gallant little crew entertained the apprehension that the slow progress they made would prevent their getting out of the range of the eruption in time to save themselves from being dashed into the waves. But, as it turned out, it was most providential that their calculations were disturbed. Ere they were a quarter of a mile from the ship, ere the fuse had burned ten minutes, with a fearful crash the vessel blew up! For an instant the air was lurid and red-hot with a volcano of rockets, grenades, and shells, propelled far up by fifteen hundred closely packed barrels of gunpowder instantaneously exploding. To this *feu de joie* succeeded a shower of enormous spars. But the boat was so near the ship that everything fell

over it. The discharged engines of destruction and terror formed colossal arches on all sides: the boat was about midway between the centre of eruption and the circle where the missiles sank into the sea. A few moments in which all were prepared for death were succeeded by the clear consciousness of salvation. But every danger was not over. From the spot where the ship had been, arose, in towering splendour, a mountain of water. In an instant the tiny gig was on its summit; a moment after, it was deep down in the trough which it left behind. The keel almost grated on the shingle beneath the waters. A second time, hardly ere the first deliverance was realised, they made sure that death was certain. But the gallant volunteers outlived the double danger. There remained but a sullen swell, the subsidence of the tumultuous catastrophe. The explosion had been infinitely more terrible than had been intended. The fire-ship had, with fortuitous fortune, been brought to at the very edge of the boom. Its spars had been riven asunder, the strong cables snapping like thread. They had mingled in the air with the spars of the shattered vessel.

Steadily back for three miles they pulled to the *Impérieuse*, guided in the darkness by her lights. On their way they had the satisfaction of seeing two fire-ships pass them, and as they followed their course, they saw them pass without a hitch over the spot where the boom had been. Meanwhile, the French ships were firing on the scene of the explosion, hitting only the vessels of their own advanced guard. When Cochrane gained the deck of his vessel, he had the mortification to discover that he could make no use of the other explosive vessel. One of the fire-ships had

been stupidly steered so near her, as to compel the crew of the *Impérieuse* to cut her away for their own safety. She drifted uselessly on to a shoal in the rear of the *Impérieuse*. It was hopeless to attempt to get her off.

Still further mortification was in store. The fire-ships were wretchedly steered; only two of them—those which had passed Cochrane's boat—reached the French lines. The rest were all kindled too soon; several of them miles to the rear of the *Impérieuse*. They either ran aground, or sailed far to the windward of the French. Fruitless as they were, the panic caused by the one explosion had completely disorganised the French ships. As the fire-ships cast a gleam of light over the waters, the enemy's vessels—their commanders fearing that each approaching fire-ship was also an explosive vessel—were descried being run hastily aground on the shores of the river, or retreating up its central channel. Inefficiently as Cochrane's general plan had been executed, still the fruit of what he had done himself personally was enough to justify his confident predictions of success.

When daylight dawned on the 12th, all the French vessels were aground, save two. Now then, thought Cochrane, for the final and decisive attack. He signalled to Gambier, still lagging ten miles behind. "All the enemy's ships, except two, are on shore." He received a mere reply of acknowledgment, tantamount to the conventional "Very good!"—no indication of at once pursuing the course which should naturally have followed upon the discovery.

"The enemy's ships can be destroyed."—"Very good," again.

Cochrane, chafed and impatient, now signals, "The enemy's ships can be destroyed."—From listless Gambier, the meaningless "Very good" still.

"The frigates *alone* can destroy the enemy."—Imperturbable reply, "Very good."

By this time it was nine o'clock, and there was not the slightest sign that the wondrous fortune was to be turned to an account which would have been at once so easy and so decisive. The tide, too, was rising, and ere long the English ships would cease to have the advantage of the flood; and as the waters rose, the chances of the stranded ships getting afloat and away were augmented. Cochrane, divided between blank perplexity and just indignation, signals, "The enemy is preparing to heave off."—"Very good," still once more. But to Cochrane's great joy, in spite of the continued vague reply, he now saw the English fleet preparing to approach. As they neared him, he prepared his ship for action, not doubting that this was at last—and, in spite of all delay, not too late—intended. He was plunged back into his old chagrin by the extraordinary sight of Gambier again coming to anchor five miles in rear of the *Impérieuse*, eight miles distant from the nearest stranded vessel.

Fertile of device as ever, Cochrane now formed the extraordinary resolution of sailing up to the attack alone; he hoped by shame to compel his Admiral to support him, if no ordinary motive would avail. We have said, "*sailing* up;" but this is not literally correct. He feared that if he made sail he would receive orders to return. Therefore, with all his canvass furled, he drifted stern forward towards the stranded ships. When near enough, he suddenly



unfurled, and signalled, "Enemy superior to chasing ship, but inferior to the fleet." "Very good." Again, "In want of assistance;" which Lord Cochrane naïvely says, in his own account of the transaction, "was true enough, being in a single frigate, close to several enemy's ships of the line." Still, the same reply.

Cochrane being "in for it," went to work vigorously, and fired into every French vessel within his range. Presently, to his delight, several vessels were sent to his assistance. One of the French ships, at which he was firing, at once struck her flag—struck to Cochrane alone, for the other ships had not come up to his aid. That the surrender was to Cochrane alone, appears from the fact that the captain who struck to him was afterwards tried by court-martial, and shot for having "surrendered to inferior force." After the auxiliary vessels came up and opened fire, two more French ships struck, and one blew up. By this time night had fallen, and nothing more could be done.

At day-break of the 13th, the *Impérieuse* and her recent allies were signalled by the Admiral to retire! Cochrane, choosing to infer that the recall did not apply to him, who had independent instructions from the Admiralty, calmly cleared for action. Four brigs stayed with him, and a fifth, commanded by the present Admiral Sir George Seymour. No shot had been fired, when the order of recall was again hoisted. Cochrane rejoined, pertinacious still, "The enemy can be destroyed." Gambier's rejoinder was, a letter brought to the *Impérieuse* in a boat; the gist of it was, "You have done your part so admirably, that I

will not suffer you to tarnish it by attempting impossibilities." A certain option was reserved, to remain if certain (specified) French vessels could be destroyed. Cochrane vaguely replied, " We can destroy the ships that are on shore ; " thus avoiding reference to those designated by Gambier—these being the most inaccessible of all. The time that was granted them, had enabled them to effect their escape up the river.

The dawn of the 14th broke. Again the signal of recall. Cochrane still hesitated. A peremptory and unmistakeable letter was then sent, superseding Cochrane in his command, and demanding his immediate return, that he might sail to England with despatches, which only waited his presence to be sealed up. On board the Admiral's flag-ship, to which Cochrane, with great bitterness of spirit, repaired, he had a somewhat angry discussion with Gambier. The latter summarily closed it by sitting down, and putting in writing an authoritative order that he should at once proceed to England. On the following morning, Cochrane was sailing away to Plymouth from the scene where he had done so much ; the scene where all he guaranteed would have been done, had any other but an easily influenced old woman held the chief command.

## CHAPTER XII.

## WHAT CAME OF THE BASQUE ROADS EXPLOIT.

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A. D. 1809—1810.

Cochrane receives the Order of the Bath—Refuses to join in the contemplated vote of thanks by Parliament to Lord Gambier—Gambier demands a Court-Martial—Unsuccessful attempts to divert Cochrane from his resolution—How Gambier conducted his defence—Garbled despatches and fabricated charts—"Formidable obstacles" on the Isle of Aix—Earl Howe in the Basque Roads in 1757—Clarendon's character of Blake applied to Cochrane—Lady Chatterton's defence of Lord Gambier reviewed—The vote of thanks—Cochrane's name excluded—The debate—Cochrane's speech—He is refused employment—Joins in the agitation of the Radicals—His "extreme opinions"—Offers to conduct an expedition against the French fleet in the Scheldt—Renews in Parliament his exposure of naval abuses—Pensions and sinecures—His Grandmother's pension drawn by some one eight years after her death—He becomes a formidable opponent of the ministry—They endeavour to bribe him to apostasy—They now evince an anxiety to get quit of him, and offer him subordinate employment—After fruitlessly seeking a separate command, he declines the offer.

WE have already more than once stated that our chief purpose in this biography, is to give a succinct record of Lord Dundonald's illustrious naval services. His career as a politician and a reformer must necessarily occupy a subsidiary place. We pass over, with

only such hasty reference as is necessary to the continuity of the narrative, the events in connection with the affair of the Basque Roads, which occurred in Parliament and at the court-martial of Admiral Lord Gambier.

Nothing could be more hearty and unqualified than the commendation which was accorded to Lord Cochrane, in every official quarter, on his arrival from the fleet. The King decorated him with the Order of the Bath, the highest honour that could be bestowed for naval or military service. Lord Mulgrave, the head of the Admiralty, spontaneously informed him that he should have a vote of thanks to him proposed in Parliament. The thanks were to be given to Lord Gambier and the fleet generally, Lord Cochrane to be specified by name. Lord Cochrane at once said, that he could not consent to be the recipient of the formal expression of the national gratitude under these conditions. He did not seek thanks for himself; he had been prevented carrying out his arrangements towards the complete effect, which he had hoped would entitle him to the gratitude of the nation. Further, he stated that he should, in his place in Parliament, emphatically oppose the presentation of thanks to Lord Gambier. This he would do, not in his capacity of an officer and an eye-witness of Lord Gambier's behaviour, but as a member of Parliament, and as responsible to his Westminster constituents for the conscientious exercise of his representative duties. The approval of his own conscience he could not preserve, if he disregarded the trust imposed in him—if he consented to vote the thanks of the nation to a man who had done nothing sufficient (he spoke very

temperately) to merit them. This astonished and annoyed Lord Mulgrave and the Ministry. Mulgrave was colonel of a regiment. He endeavoured to bribe Cochrane into retraction of his resolve, by what was probably the most tempting proposal that could have been made to him. He offered him his regiment and a small squadron of frigates. He was to employ them in any expedition he liked. *Carte blanche* freedom from all control was offered, if he would only promise not to oppose the vote, or stay away from the House. But Cochrane would not flinch. The Ministry then resolved to withdraw from the vote his own name—the name of the only man who had done anything that merited national gratitude. Not only this: they informed Lord Gambier of Cochrane's intention; the Admiral at once demanded a court-martial. It was granted. Against all his representations—in spite of his repeated statement that, *as an officer*, he had made no charge or representation against his superior in command—Cochrane was assiduously held out to the public as the accuser of his Admiral.

Whether the judges who tried Lord Gambier were disposed to partiality or not, may be learned from this one fact. Upon his return to England, after his first dispatch, containing an official account of the action and his proceedings, had been received, the Board of Admiralty instructed him to write a second and amended dispatch! This latter was accepted by the judges, and put in evidence. On the discrepancies between the former, and the garbled dispatches, hinged very many of the points on which the conclusion depended. For example, in the one dispatch Lord Cochrane was very highly commended; in the

other not one word of praise was given to him. All that was said was, that "Lord Cochrane lay about three miles from the enemy!" In the first dispatch Gambier stated, that "the fortifications of the Isle of Aix were no obstacle." His whole defence turned upon the barefaced allegation in the second (barefaced because the former had been published in the *Gazette* and read by all), that it was the formidableness of the fortifications on the Isle of Aix that prevented, and justified, his not advancing to the support of Cochrane. When Cochrane proposed to produce evidence before the Court that there was no such formidable obstacle, he was overruled, on the audacious representation that such evidence was "not relevant." When Gambier read his defence, Cochrane was not allowed to be present. The ships' logs put in, as exculpatory evidence, were tampered with. Records, purporting to have been hurriedly written on the evenings of each day's fighting, were written in the finest and most careful hand. Mysterious leaves were accidentally torn out, and not forthcoming. Such facts as the last-mentioned, Lord Dundonald discovered only in the last year or two of his life. For although he solicited every Board of Admiralty, from the date of the trial down to 1857, to permit him to inspect the records and charts in their possession, his request was always refused until, under the last administration of Lord Derby, Sir John Pakington put everything at his disposal; and this act of justice was ratified and continued by the Duke of Somerset, Lord Palmerston's First Lord.

Lord Gambier in his defence took the "injured innocence" line. Its whole gist and spirit will be as

well apprehended from this one sentence as if we transcribed the entire document: "Whether Lord Cochrane supposed that he might with impunity endeavour to lower me in the opinion of my country and of my sovereign, signal marks of whose favour had at that instant been exclusively conferred upon himself—whether his Lordship thought to raise his own reputation at the expense of mine—and whether he expected that his threat would intimidate me to silence, I know not." Whether Lord Cochrane's reputation was so insecure as to make it a matter of policy to build it upon the ruins of Lord Gambier's may be inferred from this expression in Gambier's first dispatch,—Lord Cochrane's conduct "could not be exceeded by any feat of valour hitherto achieved by the British navy."

Whether, as Lord Gambier asserted at his trial, the real reason of his not having proceeded to the attack was his apprehension of shore batteries, may be gathered from the following extract from the evidence of Captain Broughton. "I heard my Lord Gambier the same morning say, it had been his intention to have gone against the batteries I now speak of, but as the enemy were on shore he did not think it necessary to run any unnecessary risk of the fleet when the object of their destruction seemed to be already obtained."

By a singular coincidence, more than fifty years before Lord Cochrane's exploit in the Basque Roads, they had been the scene of an action and a victory of a very similar character. We cite an account of it from the life of Lord Howe, in the *Naval Chronicle*. This we do, not merely because of the interest attached

to the coincidence, but, because what Howe effected was done under the guns of a fort, then in perfect order, but in Gambier's time ruined and dilapidated, but which, nevertheless, was "the formidable obstacle" which prevented his advance.

"A well-planned and vigorous attack on the coast of France being in 1757 much desired, with a view to give a decisive blow to the marine of that kingdom, a fleet was ordered to be got in readiness, under the command of Sir E. Hawke. Rear-Admiral Knowles being appointed second in command. On the 20th of September the fleet made the island of Oleron, and Sir E. Hawke ordered the Vice-Admiral to proceed to Basque Road, to stand in as near to Ile d'Aix as the pilot would carry him, with such ships of his division as he thought necessary, and to batter the fort, until the garrison should either abandon it or surrender."

"On the 22nd of September the fleet entered the bay, called the Road of Basque, between the islands of Rhé and Oleron. About eight the next morning Admiral Knowles, in the *Neptune*, with the *Magnanime*, *Barfleur*, *America*, *Alcide*, *Burford*, and *Royal William*, made sail towards Aix. Captain Howe, in the *Magnanime*, led the van. At half-past twelve the fort upon the island began to fire, but he continued to advance without exchanging a single shot, continually urging his pilot to *lay his ship as close to the fort as possible*. He dropped his anchor under the very walls. It was, however, near an hour before the fort struck its colours."

We cannot forbear citing, rather than hazard further comment of our own, an extract from Clarendon,



on the character of Blake, which exactly applies to Gambier and Cochrane.—“He despised those rules which had been long in practice, to keep his ship and men out of danger, which had been held in former times a point of great ability and circumspection; as if the principal art requisite in the captain of a ship had been to be sure to come safe home again. He was the first man who brought ships to contemn castles on shore, which had been thought ever very formidable, and were discovered by him to make a noise only, and to fright those who could be rarely hurt by them.” But there was not in Gambier the making of a Drake, Blake, Nelson, or Cochrane. As one of his own captains told him to his face, “Had Nelson been there he would not have waited for fire-ships, but would have dashed at once to the enemy.”

Writing as we do in no partizan spirit, it is but the most common justice to allude to the representations made by the custodians of Lord Gambier's good name, in rejoinder to what Lord Dundonald advanced in his autobiography. We have carefully perused Lady Chatterton's Memorials of Lord Gambier; only in two important points are Lord Dundonald's assertions contradicted. Dundonald bluntly says: — “Lord Gambier's charts were fabricated, so that he might be acquitted on his court-martial.” Lady Chatterton asserts that “the French government have now adopted, as being the most correct, the measurements given in Lord Gambier's chart in preference to their own.” This fact, even if it be true, does not affect the question. Lord Dundonald did not assert that the “measurements” of Gambier's charts were fabricated. He said, that imaginary shoals were inserted, to increase

the alleged difficulties of navigation. Lady Chatterton does not inform her readers that the French government have adopted the *soundings* of Gambier's charts. She also asserts that the Isle of Aix had been fortified in 1782 by the best French engineers. "One gun only," she asserts, "could dismantle a line-of-battle ship." How could it be, then, that the *Impérienne*, so near to the shore, was never hit?

Lord Gambier was unanimously acquitted by the court-martial.

Another ordeal was yet to be passed. The vote of thanks was to be proposed. The session of 1810 contained a plethora of such votes. Lord Milton (afterwards Earl Fitzwilliam) stated that "votes of thanks, from their frequency, had lost their value, and ceased to be an honour. They had got so much into the habit of voting thanks that it was almost an insult not to vote them." In the House of Lords the matter was very easily smuggled through, after an ineffectual attempt by Lord Grenville to obtain, and have laid on the table, the minutes of the trial.

Lord Cochrane made a similar motion in the Commons—that members might judge for themselves, whether the thanks were merited or not. A long discussion ensued. The ministry strenuously resisted the production of the minutes, but with some diffidence and nervousness in their tone.

Their altered tone may be inferred from what Mr., afterwards Lord, Grey said in his speech,— "He was glad to find, from the humble and chastened tone of ministers, that they appeared to feel some remorse for the numerous miseries which, by their imbecility and misconduct, they had inflicted on their country. Had

it been otherwise, he should have supposed the Almighty's vengeance was hanging over this nation, and that, therefore, the hearts of its rulers had been hardened in proportion as their understandings were darkened."

The ministry gained their point. The minutes were not to be produced. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Perceval, then rose to propose the vote of thanks. Strange to say, although no thanks were offered to Cochrane, this gentleman had the impudence to claim credit for Gambier for an attack "conducted under the immediate direction of Lord Cochrane." Lord Cochrane, not deterred by any fastidiousness or false delicacy, opposed the vote. His words were emphatic and memorable,—“Even their verdict was not conclusive upon character; but there was another tribunal to which even that House was amenable. The public would one day exercise a judgment, even though the House might shrink from a just decision. What portion of Lord Gambier's exploit merited thanks? What had been the nature of his exploit? He lay at a distance, never brought his fleet to the place of action, or even within danger; and yet for such supineness he was to receive the highest honours of his country. The ground taken by ministers was frivolous—that where the subordinates admittedly deserved the praise, the superiors must receive it. The public would one day read the minutes, though the House would not. The public would judge from the facts, though the House would not. The public would not submit to have its eyes bound because the House chose to keep theirs shut. Let a single reason be adduced for this vote of thanks, and

he was ready to vote for it ; but the reasons which had been obtruded in the House were unworthy the name of arguments."

In spite of the support which Cochrane received from such men as Grey, Windham, and Burdett, the vote of thanks was passed by a large majority.

Although the victory of the ministry in the matter of Lord Gambier's vote of thanks was so immediate and decisive, the public continued to ponder the disclosures of facts made by Lord Cochrane and others, and a certain reaction of opinion ensued. The liberal opposition in Parliament became perceptibly strengthened. This had the effect of making every member of the dominant faction, and the heads of the naval profession, the personal enemies of Lord Cochrane. Nor was this sentiment lessened by the unrestrained manner in which he consorted and took public action with the recognised leaders of the Radicals. He spoke frequently at the great head quarters of Cartwright, Burdett, and Cobbett,—the Crown and Anchor Tavern. Extreme and dangerous as his opinions were then regarded, we cannot succeed in finding that he was a party to language a whit stronger than the following, the substance of a resolution which he supported at a public meeting:—  
"So long as the people are not fairly represented corruption must increase, our debts and taxes accumulate, our resources be dissipated, the native energy of the people be depressed, and the country be deprived of its best defences. The remedy is only to be found in the principles handed down to us by the wisdom and virtue of our forefathers, in a full and fair representation of the people in Parliament."

It is not to be wondered at, that after all that happened, the Admiralty declined to give Lord Cochrane such employment as he could honourably seek. Just while Lord Gambier's trial was in progress, the nation was eagerly expecting good news of the disastrous Walcheren expedition. Our readers know enough of Lord Cochrane's opinion of what was at once the most efficient and the cheapest way of conducting the war, to presume that that expedition—the largest that had ever left the shores of England—was warmly disapproved of by him. Cochrane presented a plan to the Admiralty, in conformity with which he undertook, if he had a few frigates and fire-ships granted to him, to destroy the fleet and dockyards in the Scheldt; to repeat, in a word, the exploit of the Basque Roads. The Admiralty, without assigning any reason, declined his offer. The *Impériuse* formed one of the naval expedition; Cochrane was even prevented from taking her command, having been superseded in favour of a *locum tenens*. Forced to remain on shore, he paid close attention to his duties in Parliament. He did not lose sight of his advocacy of the interests of the service, and his exposure of naval abuses, although he took a leading part with Burdett and Cobbett in agitation of a general political character. In the session of 1810, he laid bare the extortions of the Admiralty Courts. Not only did seamen, but the nation, suffer from the whole system. "The commerce of the enemy," Lord Cochrane said, "was carried on to an immense extent, by a system of licenses, which permitted the enemy to trade where they pleased. These licenses issued by us (through the Admiralty Court) formed an

article of common sale in Hamburg and other places; and by means of such licenses the enemy's ships were seen coasting along by hundreds in perfect security, even filling the river Thames, contrary to the Navigation Act. We were thus raising up sailors for Buonaparte, to whose commerce and navy our ministers were the best friends." A very partial success attended Cochrane's efforts. His motion for documents on the subject were carried; but no practical steps towards reform were taken.

After having occupied a very prominent place in the great excitement which attended the arrest and imprisonment of Sir Francis Burdett by order of Parliament, Cochrane gave his attention to the Pension List. He proved that, while the smallest pittances were given to disabled officers and seamen, the annual cost of sinecures exceeded that of all the dockyards. From a mass of piquant facts brought forward by Cochrane in the House, we select these:—The widow of an admiral received the third part of the allowance of the relict of a navy commissioner. The latter received more than 13 daughters of admirals and captains. 32 flag officers, 22 captains, 50 lieutenants, 180 masters, 36 surgeons, 23 pursers, 91 boatswains, 97 gunners, 202 carpenters, and 41 cooks, cost the country about £4,000 less than three viscounts—Lords Arden, Camden, and Buckingham. All the superannuated admirals, captains, and lieutenants had less than Lord Camden alone. Lord Arden received more than the aggregate paid to all the wounded officers in the navy, and the families of all those killed in action. The Wellesley family received "a sum equal to 426 pairs of lieutenants' legs. Lord Arden had the value of

1022 captains' arms. The Marquis of Buckingham, out of his pension, could pay the salaries of the officers and the casual expenses of the victualling departments at Chatham, Dover, Sheerness, Cork, Downs, Malta, Mediterranean, Gibraltar, Cape of Good Hope, and Rio, and still leave a surplus of £5460. A Mr. Ponsonby, who had been in office just a year and a month, received a sum equal to the earnings of nine admirals." The most curious disclosure made by Lord Cochrane yet remains to be told. Let it be told in his own words:—"From the minute expenses noticed in the naval estimates, viz., for oiling clocks, killing rats, and keeping cats, I suppose that great care has been taken to have everything correct. It was, therefore, with great surprise that I found the name of my worthy and respected grandmother, the widow of the late Captain Gilchrist, of the navy, continuing on the list as receiving £100 per annum, though she ceased to exist eight years ago." "Some patriotic individual had been drawing her pension, as though she were still living."

Cochrane was becoming dangerous. The Government and the Admiralty had found that he could not be bullied into compliance and silence. They resolved to try to bribe him, by holding out to him prospects of professional advancement if he would relinquish his career on shore. The bribe, strange to say, was publicly offered, but in a very dextrous and delicate way. Mr. Wellesley Pole, in a reply to one of Cochrane's speeches on the pension question, thus spoke:—"There is a considerable degree of eccentricity in the noble lord's manner; but at the same time he has so much good British stuff about him, and so much

knowledge of his profession, that he will always be listened to with great respect. It is, therefore, the more to be lamented that he does not follow the dictates of his own good understanding, instead of being guided by the erroneous advice, and adopting the wild theories of others. Let me advise him that adhesion to the pursuits of his profession, of which he is so great an ornament, will tend more to his own honour and to the advantage of his country than a perseverance in the conduct which he has of late adopted; conduct which can only lead him into error, and make him the dupe of those who use the authority of his name to advance their own mischievous purposes." These sentences hardly need the elucidation of Lord Cochrane's own comment:—"This overture was unmistakeable. If I would quit Sir Francis Burdett, sell my constituents, and come over to the ministerial side, the Government would, despite the affair of Lord Gambier, put me in the way of advancement."

By this time Cochrane had proved so formidable an antagonist to the Ministry in Parliament, that they learned the impolicy of having kept him on shore. They were now as anxious to see him once more on board ship, as they had recently been determined to deny him all opportunity of professional distinction and national service. Ever since Cochrane left the Basque Roads, his frigate, the *Impérieuse*, had been commanded by Captain Duncan, a son of the famous Admiral, appointed by the Admiralty, nominally as Cochrane's substitute, but virtually as his successor. When the *Impérieuse* was sent to the Scheldt, Cochrane had applied for permission to rejoin her; it had



been denied him. Now that it was considered desirable to get him out of the way, he was suddenly ordered to join in a week, and reprimanded "for unjustifiably absenting himself from his ship." The *Impérieuse* was to form part of the Mediterranean fleet. Cochrane received the command on the 5th of June (1810); three days after he communicated with the Admiralty, again emphatically urging the importance of organizing flying squadrons of frigates to harass the French coasts and commerce, and begging to be employed on such service. To this, the only reply he got, was the inquiry whether it was his intention to join his ship within the specified time. This, then, was the only employment offered to Cochrane. The offer, or command, was most cruel and insulting. Cochrane, for what he had done, certainly merited promotion at once in equity and by the rules of the service. At the very least, he ought to have had a larger ship. Even the offer of the *Impérieuse* was not an exact equivalent of the position he had held. For, for some time before the Basque Roads action, he had enjoyed individual liberty of action, and had been only nominally acting under an Admiral's orders. From this freedom, so congenial to him, he was deposed and ordered to command one of the controlled satellites of an Admiral's pennant. To the Admiralty he returned a final reply, again begging permission to carry out his own plans, and respectfully declining to join the *Impérieuse* within the time specified. To this last communication he received no reply; but Captain Duncan was gazetted to the command. The *Impérieuse* did not sail for a month, a

plain proof that the extraordinary celerity with which Cochrane was commanded to join arose from the Government's desire to have him out of the House of Commons, not their wish to have him on board his frigate.

## CHAPTER XIII.

A SINGULAR IMPRISONMENT, AND A RUNAWAY  
MARRIAGE.

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A.D. 1811—1812.

A trip to Malta—Corruptions of the Admiralty Court there—Cochrane undertakes their exposure—A lengthy Proctor's Bill—The Court in a fix—A curious exploration—The rape of a document—An order of arrest, and the difficulties of exercising it—Snug pluralities—Cochrane lodged in prison—Chaired by a tip-staff—Fine living at a Marshal's expense—Cochrane's trial—His escape from prison—Proceedings in Parliament—His secret plans of warfare—What the secret cost him—Remarks on the plans—Matrimonial projects—How they were frustrated, and at what cost—Cochrane chooses a wife for himself—His marriage in Scotland.

In 1811, Lord Cochrane took a trip to Malta. Some arrears, on account of prizes, were due to himself and his men. The Maltese Admiralty Court, in place of realising and handing over a handsome balance, sent Cochrane an account which made him in their debt for "vicious condemnation." This was going rather too far. He had no prospect of employment; he was far from indisposed to annoy the Admiralty; he had himself been wronged. He resolved, therefore, to proceed to Malta and inquire into the whole system

of Admiralty Courts. A certain rate of fees and charges was imposed by the High Court of Admiralty on all its branches. The foreign courts, Cochrane knew, charged just what they liked. The express object of his journey was to procure formal evidence of the overcharges and speculation. A pretty clear idea of the way in which matters were transacted may be gathered from this one fact. A Mr. Jackson held the office of marshal of the Court. The marshal's work he delegated to a deputy, in order that he might personally undertake the lucrative duties of proctor. Thus, "every prize placed in his hands as proctor had to pass through his hands as marshal; whilst as proctor, it was further in his power to consult himself as marshal as often as he pleased, and to any extent he pleased." Between proctor and marshal—Jackson in each capacity seeking to augment his gains—it is not to be wondered at that little that went into the Court ever came out again. Such huge bills were made out against captains, that Lord Cochrane once unrolled one in the House of Commons, and it reached from the Speaker's table to the bar.

Cochrane embarked in his private yacht, and sailed for the Mediterranean. When he arrived at Valetta, he at once demanded from the Court that the account of the prizes made by the *Speedy* and *Impérieuse* should be taxed by the authorised table of fees. This was refused. Cochrane tried again. He entered the Court and demanded the Admiralty's table of fees from the Judge-Advocate. He replied that he knew nothing about them. An Act of Parliament provided that they should be hung up in every Admiralty Court. Cochrane looked all round, but could see no

such document. He walked into the Judge's robing-room, but found no table of fees. Then he went into a private closet, and succeeded in finding the object of his search behind the door. He took it down, and returned into Court, folding and pocketing his prize. The Judge-Advocate saw what Cochrane had, and rose to prevent his getting off with it. Cochrane told him that it was no part of his duty to guard the Judge's retiring-closet, and advised him to go and tell the Judge. The Judge-Advocate did nothing. Cochrane got safe off, and placed his capture in the keeping of a friend, who was about to sail for Sicily. He wished to be secure against losing it, for his principal object was to exhibit it in Parliament.

When the Judge of the Court learned what had been abstracted, he was in great wrath, for he had a pretty clear idea of what Lord Cochrane had taken it for, and what would come of its exhibition. Cochrane was at once ordered to restore it; he as promptly replied that it was not in his possession. The Judge at once ordered him into custody for contempt of Court. The duty of arresting Cochrane naturally devolved upon Mr. Proctor-marshal Jackson. Conscientious as he was of the illegality of his holding the double office, and apprehensive of Cochrane's forthcoming exposure, he declined the task. It was imposed upon the deputy-marshal. Cochrane informed this functionary that he could not arrest him, for his office was illegal, being vitiated by the illegality of the office of his superior, as well as by the circumstance that he was himself a pluralist, being the auctioneer as well as the deputy-marshal of the Court.

For nine days matters stood still. All the officers

and seamen in the port were amused and deeply-interested spectators; for Cochrane was acting in the interest of every one of them. Cochrane openly walked about the island; he gave every opportunity of arrest, but the officials were afraid to act. At last, the furious Judge threatened to imprison the deputy-marshal himself for contempt, unless he arrested Cochrane. The deputy, to get out of the dilemma, at once resigned his own post. A fresh officer was appointed with the full knowledge that his first duty would be to arrest Lord Cochrane. The duty was discharged in a very malicious way. Cochrane was visiting a friend, when the new deputy was announced. Cochrane asked to see his warrant. Finding it signed by the marshal, and thus obtaining a formal proof of his acting illegally, he surrendered. The deputy asked him to accompany him to an hotel, where he might remain on parole. Cochrane said he would do nothing of the kind; he had made him a prisoner, and he must take him to the jail like any other prisoner. The deputy then asked Cochrane to rise and accompany him thither. "No," replied the prisoner, "I will be no party to an illegal imprisonment of myself. If you want me to go to jail, you must carry me by force, for assuredly I will not walk." By this time the room was filled with officers, who greatly enjoyed the perplexity of the official. He sent for a carriage, and then for a picket of soldiers, who had to carry Cochrane, seated in his chair, into the vehicle; for he would not stir a muscle to facilitate his arrest, but remained perfectly passive, and offered no resistance.

When fairly in prison, he found himself pretty

comfortable. He had commodious apartments, and respectful attendance. Immediately after his arrival, the jailer asked him what he would order for dinner. Cochrane said, Nothing ; he had been arrested on an illegal warrant ; he would not pay for a crust of bread ; if he was starved to death, the Court would have to answer for it. The jailer was astonished ; but in a short time he returned, the bearer of an order from the marshal, that Lord Cochrane should be supplied with whatever he required. When Cochrane was made sure as to who should have to pay the expenses, his abstemious resolution immediately departed. He at once ordered dinner for six, enjoining the jailer to get the very best, both of food and wines, that was to be had in Malta. While he gave instructions about the dinner, he at the same time sent invitations to five of his naval friends. Day after day this went on, officers from all the ships in the harbour being invited in turn ; for Cochrane felt that any who were passed over would regret not having taken part in the reprisals upon him who had fleeced them all. What the total bill came to, Cochrane never inquired or learned. It must have taken a very considerable slice out of the marshal's gains for the year to pay for it.

By this time, Cochrane had been in prison nearly three weeks, and the Court began to consider what should be done with him. They began to fear that they had taken a false step. They were now as eager to release Lord Cochrane, as they had been to imprison him. But how to effect this was their difficulty. The Governor of the island was requested to use his influence with Cochrane. When he asked

him to return the table of fees, Cochrane replied that, having been illegally arrested, he would not quit the prison except to be tried. They had no help for it then, but to try him; but then the difficulty arose, on what charge? This they could not determine. They resolved on the very un-English course of interrogating him, and trusting to his answers for some confession on which they might build a charge.

On the second of March, Cochrane was taken into Court, all the superior naval officers in the port accompanying him. The only thing in the shape of a charge was the deposition of two clerks, that they "had seen a person, whom they believed to be Lord Cochrane, in possession of a folded paper." This was expanded into a formal accusation of his having abstracted the table of charges. He replied ironically, that there must be an error, for as the Act of Parliament enjoined that the table should be displayed in the open Court, and what he was alleged to have taken was taken from a retiring closet to which the public had no access, it must have been something else than the table of fees that he had taken. And if the paper was folded up when it was seen in his hand, no one could tell what it was. After some fencing between the judge and the prisoner, in which Cochrane carefully abstained from committing himself in any way, the judge admitted that he had not exhibited the table in Court, for the Act enjoining that this should be done had not been certified by the King in council. On this, Cochrane protested against the whole proceedings as illegal. The judge then asked him to go at large on bail. Cochrane de-



clined, saying he should stay where he was till his case was settled on its merits. Back to the jail he went. His friends accompanied him. They unanimously advised him that he had now carried the affair far enough, that he had better apologise for taking the document, and send over for it to his friend in Sicily. This he firmly refused to do, reminding them that the express object of his whole proceedings, was to carry the table away as a trophy, and a proof, to lay before Parliament. They then took different ground. They said the seamen were getting dangerous and angry, and that they threatened to pull down the jail. They asked him if he had any objection to make his escape, in order to prevent any outbreak which might reflect discredit on the service. He at once replied that he had no objection. Arrangements were forthwith made. After the banquet of each night (for they were still continued) Cochrane filed away a bar from the window. After three or four nights, the proper time came; the jailer was made drunk, Cochrane's servant was in readiness with some sailors outside. Cochrane lowered himself by a rope, and "bade adieu to the merriest prison in which a seaman was ever incarcerated." He went down to the harbour, found a boat and crew ready: they pulled till they overtook an English packet, and the escaped hero was fairly on his way home to England ere his flight was discovered.

On his return, Cochrane once more plunged into politics. He had given up all hopes of active employment, but he remained most faithful to every interest of his profession. Ere long he brought forward a motion on the subject of the Maltese Court. He

exposed, tersely and humorously, all he knew of the nature and operations of that tribunal. The papers moved for were granted, but the usual conclusion arrived at. Nothing was done to mend matters.

It was at this period of his life that Lord Cochrane first brought forward certain secret plans of his invention for attacking and destroying fleets and forts. The Prince Regent appointed a commission to investigate the proposal. Its members reported that the mode of attack would be irresistible, but that if it became known, it might endanger our colonial possessions. The First Lord of the Admiralty, Melville, shortly after offered to Cochrane to execute a part of his plan. But Cochrane refused to permit it to be undertaken except as a whole. At various subsequent periods did Lord Cochrane renew his offer; the last time, as will be remembered, during the Crimean war. But ever with the same result. The Prince Regent had exacted, and Cochrane had given, a promise that he would never divulge his secret, or make use of it, except in the service of his country. A few years after, when—as we shall ere long narrate—he entered the service of foreign States, when his chances of employment by his own land were even more unlikely than in 1811, he was ardently urged by the governments of the South American Republics to employ his secret plans in their warfare. They represented to him that his native country had behaved to him so ignobly and ungratefully, that he was fully released from all honourable obligation to reserve his strongest weapons for the use and advantage of England. But Cochrane was one of the very last men with whom considerations of this nature would have any weight.

He persistently refused. His refusal cost him much, for the Government of Chili and Brazil refused to pay him the stipulated reward of his services, in resentment at his patriotic obstinacy.

It is impossible to canvas the merits of Lord Cochrane's secret plans, in our entire ignorance of their nature. Still, much force must be allowed to the consideration that, had there not been very strong reasons against their adoption, it is most probable that two entirely different bodies of competent inquirers would not have determined against using the device. Even on Lord Dundonald's own showing, in his autobiography, once the plan were put in operation, its occurrence would instantaneously reveal its nature. In other words, the English Government could have the sole use of it only once; after that, it would be open to the adoption of all the world. Any fiend or madman, at any time, could then perpetrate wholesale massacres. We can think no otherwise than that it is well that the dangerous secret has not been disclosed.

An uncle of Lord Cochrane, the Honourable Basil Cochrane, having made a large fortune in India, retired, and took up his residence in London. He invited his nephew to reside with him, and the invitation was accepted. Ere long, the uncle suggested that Lord Cochrane should marry a young lady of good fortune, who was the daughter—of all other men—of an Admiralty official who had become rich by the very practices which Lord Cochrane had taken such pains to discover and denounce. The lady must have been attractive indeed, in favour of whom this serious obstacle could be overcome by a man like our hero. And, besides, his influence and authority as the exposé of the class

of abuses with which he had so prominently identified his name, would have been entirely sapped by his contracting such a connection. He at once refused to comply with his uncle's request. The Honourable nabob quietly told him to please himself, but added that he had better reflect, for the fortune that he had designed to leave him, along with the dowry of his proposed wife, would have gone far to restore the standing of the Dundonald family. With thorough Scottish and aristocratic feeling, the whole plan of the uncle, the cadet of the noble house, had been concocted with the hope of re-establishing the head of the family in a position worthy of its rank and ancient fame. Neither the years of life in India, nor the levelling associations of trade, in which he had been engaged, had obliterated the sentiment from the mind of the old man. He pretty plainly let his nephew infer that if this wish of his was thwarted, it would not only cost him the lady's fortune, but would entirely alter his own intentions about the ultimate disposition of his wealth.

Lord Cochrane was sustained in his resolve by a motive far more potent than even his aversion to soiling his hands with the ill-gotten gains of an Admiralty Court harpy. He was already in love, and engaged to be married to a lady of good family, Miss Katherine Barnes, an orphan, and residing with a guardian with whom Lord Cochrane was on friendly terms, and in whose house he had met his betrothed. Unwilling to offend his uncle openly, he, with some difficulty, persuaded Miss Barnes to marry him secretly. They crossed the border, and were married at Annan, a few miles further north than Gretna Green. Very shortly

after the return of the newly-married couple, Mr. Cochrane altered his proposals to his nephew. He formally stated that he should leave him half of his fortune if he married—not the lady recommended, to the sources of whose wealth he had so strong an objection—but some lady of fortune, not to be selected without the uncle's sanction. To this Lord Cochrane replied by letting the truth out, and informing his uncle that he was married already. He lost the legacy—even his uncle's friendship while he survived. But he gained an excellent wife, a true helpmeet to him in every phase of his future life. The Countess of Dundonald still survives her illustrious husband.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE STOCK EXCHANGE TRIAL.

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A.D. 1814.

Retrospect—The causes of Cochrane's non-employment—Conjectural history—Ought Lord Cochrane to have entered Parliament?—England at war with America—Cochrane unexpectedly offered employment—Captain De Berenger forms the acquaintance of Cochrane, who is frustrated in his attempts to engage his services—The Stock Exchange hoax—How Cochrane was involved in the suspicion—His affidavit of innocence—Inherent improbabilities of his criminality—The trial and the sentence—The pillory—The fine, and how it was paid—Dismissed the service and expelled the House of Commons—Unanimously re-elected by Westminster—Horrors of his imprisonment—He makes his escape, appears in the House, and is re-arrested—Opinions on the case of Lords Brougham, Campbell, Abinger, and Fortescue.

IN the preceding portions of our necessarily concise record, we have frequently resisted the temptation temporarily to suspend the thread of narrative, and interpose comments and remarks of our own, which seemed to us fairly to be suggested by various positions occupied by Lord Cochrane. We have exercised this reticence, believing it to be our prime duty to present to our readers, with as much fulness as possible, the naval exploits of one of England's most illustrious captains. Hence, we have designedly left a very

secondary place for his efforts in Parliament and as a citizen. Where we have dwelt upon any incident of his public life on shore, it has only been in regard to his endeavours to gain redress for the wrongs of his profession, and his exposure of naval mal-administration. But we should be guilty of culpable one-sidedness, if, misled by over-zeal to reserve the largest canvas for his warlike deeds, we neglected altogether to give expression to certain obvious and important reflections suggested by Lord Cochrane's career as a politician and a friend of freedom; as the features of that career affected him personally, and as they bore upon the general interests of the nation.

Few temptations ought to be more strenuously guarded against by the annalist of any description of historical events, than the indulgence of conjecture as to what would have been the difference effected in the current of history, if certain leading, causal, historic events had not occurred. Human life is so short, and human history is so ample, that it is but a fruitless waste of time to engage in such seductive speculations as what would have been Grecian history if Leonidas had not held the pass, and Themistocles had not conquered; of Roman history, if the Rubicon had never been crossed by the conqueror of the Gauls; of English history, if Edward the Confessor had not willed his crown to William the Bastard; or of the general fate of Europe, if Philip of Spain had subjugated the Flemings, and proved his Armada really Invincible. We abstain from speculating, then, as to how far the progress of the great war with Napoleon would have been affected in the case of Cochrane's having been as actively employed from his Basque

Roads achievement up till the termination of the war, as it had been from his first cruise in the Mediterranean to the terrible blow he struck in the Charente. Up till the day of his death he retained, and expressed, the firm conviction, that had the system of conducting the war which he fruitlessly pressed upon the Admiralty been adopted, the war in the Peninsula would have been avoided, and some hundreds of millions saved to the nation. The natural inference from this statement, if we were implicitly to accept it, could scarcely be short of the conclusion that Wellington would have missed his crowning career, the final Waterloo would have been a naval fight, Cochrane its possible hero, and his name to-day the greatest of all England's sea-kings. Without wandering in this direction, however, or falling into the error we condemn, we are quite safe when we emphasize the circumstance that the non-employment of Cochrane in the last epoch of the great war, was a fact of very considerable national importance. That being admitted, it becomes instructive to revert, very briefly, to the causes which produced this severance between the land that so wanted to be well served, and the head, heart, and hand which had proved themselves so capable of good service. We believe that the truth, here, lies *in mediis*. The circumstance that Cochrane was of no use to his country in the field of action, in the heroic years between Walcheren and Waterloo, is partly attributable to the English Government, and partly to Lord Cochrane himself. We cannot go the length of saying, as has been said, "that he had himself to blame" for the protracted idleness of his sword. Still, although no blame can



be alleged against him, he did much to cause his own non-employment. Many things which, not unnaturally, stood in the way of his service afloat, were voluntary acts of his own; with regard to them he had the free and unhampered election to do them, or not to do them. He did them dispassionately and after deliberation, knowing thoroughly that they must stand between him and professional and patriotic ambition. It may be, and we believe it, that these acts were honest, dutiful, and conscientious in respect of motive, as well as beneficial in effect. Still, if he voluntarily did them, knowing that they would militate against his advancement as a sailor, it would be historically partial to condole with him to the full extent for consequences which he not only foresaw, but which he voluntarily did much to precipitate. He need not have opposed the vote of thanks to Lord Gambier; he need not have devoted himself so assiduously as he did to onslaughts on the Admiralty and its doings; he need not have identified himself so overtly with the extreme Liberals in matters of general politics. To this it will be replied, that as a Member of Parliament, and the trustee of a specific body of citizens, he was as much under the compulsion to give full vent to his convictions (his own representation in the instance of the vote of thanks to Lord Gambier) as he was obliged, in his capacity of sea captain, to do his very best for the nation. This is true; but then Lord Cochrane need not have been a Member of Parliament, if he had not so chosen. While it might be too much to say that the duties of a Radical politician, and of a dashing sailor, necessarily clash; this, at least, must be ad-

mitted, that the dutiful expression of what were his conscientious liberal sentiments necessarily created difficulties in the way of free opportunity for the exercise of his duty in his profession. Whether the doctrine still holds good in our own times, when politics are no longer passionate, and public opinion dispenses the awards formerly assigned by party favour, it is for our present purpose needless to inquire. Sir Charles Napier's Radical outspokenness as a metropolitan member, might not have materially interfered with his chances of further employment. The parliamentary acts of Cochrane as the Radical member for the most extreme constituency in the kingdom, actually did keep him ashore during the seven stirring years which preceded Napoleon's downfall. These considerations do not make out Lord Cochrane to be blameable for combining the *rôles* of politician and captain ; but they go far to account for his non-employment. On the other hand, they go very little way indeed to mitigate the blameableness of Government, in depriving one of the nation's best servants of his appropriate reward, and for withholding from the nation the services of one of its most effective commanders.

Spite of the fact, which Cochrane and the general public had quite made up their minds to, that he should not again receive a command from the Admiralty, there did at last dawn upon him the prospect of again serving his country.

President Madison, of the United States, was very hostile to the British Government. An accident enabled him to give effect to his personal ill-will. In May, 1814, "an unfortunate encounter" took place

between the American frigate, *President*, and the British sloop, *Little Belt*. Although our Government made the most ample concessions, Madison succeeded in preventing any conciliation, and England and the United States went to war. The Americans tried to dispossess us of Canada, but were repulsed by the patriotic colonists. At sea they were more successful, never hazarding general engagements, but pursuing the true Cochrane plan of acting with single frigates. Their frigates carried more guns, and they were of heavier metal than ours, and the Americans generally had the best of the encounters. Affairs being in this condition, the English people became aroused, and the Government were compelled to devise sufficient means to appease the rising popular wrath. If there were the slightest hope that, under any circumstances, Cochrane should ever again have a command offered him, this was the very occasion. Of all men in the service he was the very man to employ. The Admiralty, however, seem never to have thought of him. But it so happened that Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, Lord Cochrane's uncle, was appointed in 1814 to the command of the North American station. In conformity with the rule or custom of the service, he had the privilege of selecting his own flag-captain. He appointed his nephew. Thus, by an interesting coincidence, was Cochrane indebted for the opportunity of further patriotic service, after he had given up all hope, to the kind friend who had influenced his first choice of a profession, and procured him his first appointment as a midshipman.

The *Tonnant*, a line-of-battle ship, was to carry the

Admiral's pennant. It was not ready to go to sea. Admiral Cochrane did not wait for it, but set out, leaving his nephew to follow in the ship.

After Admiral Sir A. Cochrane had been appointed, he had frequently solicited the Board of Admiralty for permission to take with him a foreign gentleman, who held a commission in the Duke of Cumberland's Sharpshooters, and who, he believed, would be of great service, both on account of his skill as a musketry instructor, and as a machinist and engineer of warlike projectiles. This foreigner, Captain de Berenger, was a friend of Mr. Cochrane Johnstone, Admiral Cochrane's brother. It was he who had introduced and recommended him to the Admiral. The Admiralty had refused every application that he should be engaged. In this innocent and accidental way, let it be observed, Lord Cochrane made the acquaintance of De Berenger.

In January Lord Cochrane dined with his uncle, Mr. Cochrane Johnstone, and met De Berenger. The latter, towards the end of the party, asked Lord Cochrane to step aside for some private conversation. He solicited Lord Cochrane to take him with him in the *Tonnant*, in any capacity whatever. He had given up all hopes of the Admiralty permitting his being engaged, but he would take his chance of the Admiral's finding some employment for him on the station. He handed to Cochrane, as credentials, testimonials of the way in which he had performed the duties of adjutant to the Duke of Cumberland's Riflemen, and others of a like character. They were laudatory and satisfactory. Cochrane politely expressed his regret that he could not possibly take

him unless the Admiralty sanctioned it; adding, that he would very gladly consent to solicit the Admiralty to reverse their decision, but for the fact that he, of all living men, had the least influence with them; and that his interference would put De Berenger in a position worse than before. For some weeks after, Cochrane, it seems, heard no more of De Berenger.

At midnight, on the 20th of February, a gentleman in a military aide-de-camp's uniform entered the Ship hotel at Dover. He gave his name as Colonel de Bourg, stated that he was Lord Cathcart's aide-de-camp, and that he had been sent over with despatches to the effect that Napoleon had been killed by Cossacks, and that the allies were marching upon Paris. This intelligence he forwarded to the Admiral of the port of Deal; wishing, as it afterwards appeared, thus to gain an official channel by which the false intelligence should be transmitted to London. We may here at once state, that the pretended De Bourg was the agent, or co-conspirator, of parties in London who had concocted the plot, and so arranged that they should profit to a very large amount by the immediate rise of Government stocks which was certain to ensue on the receipt of the news and the acceptance of them as authentic. This De Bourg was De Berenger. He ordered post horses at the Ship, and set off to London. He arrived in the morning at the Marsh Gate, Lambeth, dismissed the post-chaise, hired a hackney-carriage, and drove to Lord Cochrane's house. Whether his motive in so doing was to endeavour to implicate Cochrane, or merely to renew his previous solicitations for employment, it is impossible to say. When De Berenger called at Cochrane's

house, he was out. He had gone to a manufactory in the City, to see about the progress of a lamp which he had patented. He was at the time preparing for his departure ; so close to it, in fact, that his valet was overhauling his clothes, and selecting those garments which were necessary to be taken. While Cochrane was at the lamp manufactory, one of his servants brought him a note, which, he said, had been sent by a military officer who had called, and who was waiting his return. Cochrane took the note ; it was so illegibly written that he could not make out the name ; he feared it might be from some officer from the Peninsula, announcing the death of his younger brother, who was serving there under Wellington. He returned home, and to his surprise, found De Berenger. He seemed very uneasy, and made many apologies for the liberty he had taken. Having stated that he was environed by serious embarrassments, and that his last hope failed if he were not permitted to accompany Lord Cochrane, he again renewed his urgent solicitation. He said he had left his lodgings, so as to be ready to join the ship at once, if he were successful in this final appeal. Cochrane felt much aggrieved to behold a gentleman, of whose military talents he had so high an opinion, in so pitiable a position. He told him he would do anything he could to assist him, but that he could not possibly take him on board the *Tonnant*. The conversation continued some time, for De Berenger again and again renewed his request. When he found that it was hopeless, he professed to be awkwardly situated ; for he had called on Lord Cochrane, making sure (a manifest untruth) that his services would be accepted, and that he should

be allowed to join the *Tonnant* at once. Lord Cochrane had repeated to him that if any of his own friends succeeded in influencing the Admiralty in his favour, and he procured their sanction in time to join the *Tonnant* at Portsmouth (it sailed from Chatham), he would take him on board. De Berenger pretended to clutch at this last chance, but stated that he could not call on his friends in his military uniform, or appear in public so dressed; for he was a prisoner in the rules of the Queen's Bench, and might be recognised if clad so conspicuously. He said he must use a great liberty, and begged Cochrane to lend him a civilian's hat. He had a great-coat over his uniform. Cochrane gave him the hat, and he wrapped up his own in a towel. Cochrane saw that his uniform could be seen under his great-coat, so he offered him one of his, little knowing what construction would be afterwards put upon his free kindheartedness.

Meanwhile, Cochrane went down to Chatham. In a day or two, it transpired that the intelligence of De Bourg was false. The Committee of the Stock Exchange at once took steps to bring the concoctors of the falsehood to justice. They offered a reward of two hundred and fifty guineas for the discovery of the pretended De Bourg. It oozed out that he had been traced to Lord Cochrane's house; and it was openly said that he was involved in the transaction. The rumour reached him at Chatham, and he at once returned to town to investigate and contradict it. He made an affidavit in which he narrated every circumstance of his interview with De Berenger, and the nature of his acquaintance with him; and gave a description—referring to his broker—of the money that

he had in the funds ; clearly showing that he had had no transaction since the propagation of the false report, save the selling out of a sufficient sum to furnish ready funds for him during his absence from England.

It is most extraordinary that upon such a meagre basis as that furnished by the undenied visit of De Berenger to Cochrane—even if the contents of his own affidavit were disbelieved—a prosecution against Cochrane should have been undertaken. Lord Dundonald, in his autobiography, himself very forcibly points out the inherent improbabilities of his criminality. “ Had I been his confederate, it is not within the bounds of credibility that he would have come, in the first instance, to my house, and waited two hours for my return home in place of carrying out the plot he had undertaken, or that I should have been occupied in perfecting my lamp invention for the use of the convoy of which I was in a few days to have charge, instead of being in the only spot where any advantage to be derived from the Stock Exchange hoax could be realised, had I been a participator in it. Such advantage must have been immediate, before the truth came out, and to have reaped it, had I been guilty, it was necessary that I should not lose a moment. It is still more improbable, that being aware of the hoax, I should not have speculated largely for the special risk of that day. Neither, had I been his confederate, is it more probable that I should have declined to take him on board the *Tonnant*, when, by so doing, I could have effectually concealed him under another name, together with every trace of the plot, and could have either taken



him with me, or have shipped him in safety to the Continent."

Lord Cochrane was indicted on the charge of conspiring with his uncle, Mr. Cochrane Johnstone, De Berenger and others, to propagate false news. His own evidence was, of course, inadmissible; but his servants gave the most important exculpatory testimony, especially establishing that the uniform De Berenger wore while in their master's house was green, whereas the witnessess for the prosecution (the persons who had observed him alight from the post-chaise, and enter the hackney carriage) swore that it was scarlet. Cochrane, conscious of his own innocence, and without the slightest fear about its establishment, had been extremely negligent in the preparation of his defence. From a mistaken sense of honour, he had refused to agree to the course urged upon him by his counsel, to have his case undertaken on separate grounds from that of his uncle, who seems to have been really guilty. Lord Ellenborough, the presiding judge, and a notorious Tory partisan, summed up against Cochrane in terms of extreme malignity. Juries, at that time, were easily influenced by judges, even if they had not been previously packed. He was adjudged guilty, and condemned to pay a fine of a thousand pounds, to be imprisoned for a year, and to stand in the pillory. The last part of the sentence was remitted. Sir Francis Burdett, his parliamentary colleague, alleged that he should stand in the pillory by the side of his friend. The Government, fearing a popular tumult, announced in parliament, through Lord Castlereagh, that that indignity should not be exacted. For some

time, Lord Cochrane refused to pay the fine, on the ground that his doing so would be an acknowledgement of the justice of his sentence. At last he did so, under circumstances which his endorsement of the bank-note with which he paid it, (and which is still preserved in the Bank of England,) sufficiently explain :

“My health having suffered by long and close confinement, and my oppressors having resolved to deprive me of my property or life, I submit to robbery to prevent myself from murder, in the hope that I may live yet to bring the delinquents to justice.

“ COCHRANE.”

He was reimbursed the amount of the fine, by a subscription volunteered by his constituents. And they unanimously re-elected him, when by the vote of a large majority of the House of Commons he was expelled. He was dismissed from the naval service. A Chapter of the Bath having met and resolved on his expulsion, the King at Arms went to Henry VII.'s chapel, removed the insignia of his order from his stall, and kicked his banner down the steps of the chapel.

His allusion, in the endorsement of the bank-note, to the risk of his life to escape which he paid it, was no exaggeration. His apartment was contiguous to a cesspool, and there was “an exudation of urine through the wall.” After “symptoms of typhus had set in,” he succeeded in escaping, although by what means he never revealed. He was for some days at large, but in concealment. He thus wrote to the Speaker, announcing his escape :—

“ *March 9th, 1815.*

“SIR,—I respectfully request that you will state to the Honourable the House of Commons, that I should have immediately and personally communicated to them my departure from the custody of Lord Ellenborough, by whom I have been long most unjustly detained, but I judged it better to endeavour to conceal my absence, and to defer my appearance in the House until the public agitation excited by the Corn Bill should subside. And I have further to request that you will also communicate to the House that it is my intention on an early day to present myself for the purpose of taking my seat, and moving an enquiry into the conduct of Lord Ellenborough.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant.

“ COCHRANE.”

On the fifteenth of March, he actually did present himself, took the oath, and was shortly after re-arrested, and conveyed back to prison. His friend Cobbett, who had asserted his belief in his innocence from the first, asserts with great gratification in the number of his *Register* for April, 1815, that during the few hours Cochrane sat in the House, he voted against a grant of an additional £6,000 a year to the popularly execrated Duke of Cumberland, on the occasion of his marriage. When the term of his incarceration was complete, he returned with devotion to his parliamentary duties; but his spirit was to a large extent broken, for many even of his friends could not dismiss the suspicion of his guilt, which in every case attaches, more or less, to a judicial conviction.

To this sad story we append no comment of our own, but cite remarks made by three men, each of them a competent judge of the circumstances, and each truthful, impartial and reliable. On the culpability of Ellenborough, Lords Campbell and Brougham express slightly conflicting opinions. The former says, "Ellenborough laid special emphasis on every circumstance which might raise a suspicion against Lord Cochrane, and elaborately explained away whatever at first sight might seem favourable to the gallant officer."

Lord Brougham thus wrote to Lord Dundonald in October, 1860 :—

"I have just received your very kind letter, and I daresay the volume which you tell me has been sent to Grafton Street will speedily reach me. Accept my best thanks for it, and for all you say of your obligations to me in connection with your trial. But I must remind you that both in my correspondence and in my book, though I expressed the clear and unhesitating opinion which I have always had in common with the rest of your counsel, yet I never approved of your charge against Ellenborough in the House of Commons ; and in my book I have declared my opinion that he tried the cause as he would have tried any other in which he thought there was conflicting evidence. I think he was quite wrong in the opinions he had formed, but honestly wrong ; and the only complaint which we considered we had a right to make, and which we loudly made, was his forcing us to go on with our case, instead of adjourning at nine or ten o'clock.

"I say nothing of the sentence, in which the other judges were quite as much to blame as the chief. I

think justice to the departed requires that I should remind you of my opinion respecting Ellenborough, the more so because I have little doubt that I shall find a good deal said against him in your second volume."

At a much earlier date, Lord Brougham had thus expressed his opinion on the more important question of Cochrane's guilt or innocence,—“ If Lord Cochrane was at all aware of his uncle, Mr. Cochrane Johnstone's proceedings, it was the whole extent of his privity to the fact. Having been one of the counsel engaged in the cause, I can speak with some confidence respecting it, and I take it upon myself to assert that Lord Cochrane's conviction was mainly owing to the extreme reluctance which he felt to giving up his uncle, or taking those precautions for his own safety, which would have operated against that near relation. Even when he, the real criminal, had confessed his guilt, by taking to flight, and the other defendants were brought up for judgment, we, the Counsel, could not persuade Lord Cochrane to shake himself loose from the contamination by abandoning him.”

We append the testimony of the venerable Earl Fortescue, communicated to Lord Dundonald on the day before his death, not only because of the opinion it expresses, but because its statements complete the outline of facts we have given in the preceding pages:—

*“Paris, Nov. 1, 1860.*

“ My Lord,—I have just finished the second volume of your lordship's instructive and agreeable work, with an amount of interest naturally heightened to

one whose recollections extend over so much that you record; but I have dwelt with more painful interest on that part which relates to your trial in 1814, and to the proceedings consequent upon it.

“I deeply regret that after the receipt of the letter which your lordship addressed to me on the motion of which I had given notice in the House of Commons I did not act on the impression which that letter conveyed, and ground my motion on my belief in your innocence. But, though I felt bound to give credit to your asseveration, I was not prepared to say that the verdict of the jury appeared to me wholly unsupported by the evidence brought before them. I thought it best, therefore, to abstain from comment on the trial, and to confine my speech (the first that I ever made on any public question in Parliament) as much as possible to reprobation of the brutal and barbarous sentence pronounced upon you.

“Your lordship has quoted in your favour the opinions of the two greatest constitutional lawyers of our time, still happily spared to us in the full vigour of their intellectual powers.

“To their authority might be added that of the late Lord Abinger, whom I myself heard declare some years after he became chief justice, at a dinner party at the late Sir George Philip’s, where the conversation happened to turn on your trial, that, having been one of your counsel, and fully acquainted with all the facts of the case, he was satisfied of your innocence, and that he believed it might have been established to the satisfaction of the jury if the judge had not arbitrarily hurried on the defence at a late hour in the evening, and when all parties were wearied with the fatigue of

a twelve hours' continuous sitting in court, though he had been applied to for an adjournment till the next morning.

"I apprehend, however, that all question of your innocence was set at rest by your restoration to your naval rank by the Government of King William IV., in 1833, and to the Order of the Bath by that of Her present Majesty in 1844, and, as I am at a loss to conceive why your restoration was not made as full and complete as that of Sir Robert Wilson, to which you refer, I cannot but hope that that tardy act of justice will yet be done to you by her Majesty's present honest and high-minded advisers.

"Every lover of his country ought to feel grateful to your lordship for your able exposure of the manner in which the administration of justice, whether by courts-martial or courts of law, has heretofore, but within our own times, been perverted to some party objects or personal resentment; and everyone will, I am sure, wish with me to receive from your powerful pen some further account of your eventful and distinguished career.

"I beg to subscribe myself, with true respect,

"Your lordship's faithful and obedient servant,

"FORTESCUE."

## CHAPTER XV.

## FIGHTING ONCE MORE: BUT UNDER A FOREIGN FLAG.

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A.D. 1817—1820.

Is invited to command the fleet of the insurgent Chilians—The English Government interpose an obstacle, which fails—Arrives at Valparaiso with his family—Enthusiastic reception—His fleet—A young recruit—Attacks Callao—His youthful son's heroism—Leaves Callao—"El Diablo"—Lady Cochrane's life in peril—Her clemency—Galling restraints by the Chilian Government—Resolves "to effect an impossibility"—A portrait drawn by Lord Cochrane—He reconnoitres the strong citadel of Valdivia—Traps a pilot—A rich prize—A narrow escape—Cochrane his own ship's carpenter—The fortifications of Valdivia—He resolves to attack it—An unsuccessful *ruse*—Effects a landing—Powder and shot *versus* bayonet—A lucky accident—A chase and a conquest—Loses two of his vessels—The town surrenders—All Chili in native possession.

IN the year 1818, Lord Cochrane resigned his parliamentary duties. The South American provinces of Spain and Portugal were engaged in their struggles for independence. The patriots of Chili offered Cochrane the command of a squadron they were raising. He having no hope of employment in the service of his country, accepted the offer. Even here, the animosity of the English Government pursued him. His mission to Chili had scarcely become known when the influence of Spain induced the Ministry to



have passed a "Foreign Enlistment Act," the penal clauses of which were obviously aimed at Lord Cochrane. This, however, he disregarded; he would not be restrained from the enterprise.

In 1817, Don Jose Alvarez, the accredited ambassador of Chili, but not yet recognised by the European powers, had applied to Lord Cochrane to organise a naval force, capable of contending against the Spaniards. Although the Chilians were successful on shore, their former oppressors still retained the command of the Pacific. Lord Cochrane embraced the offer, purposing to remain in England until the completion of a new steamer which he was to take out to Valparaiso. But before this was accomplished, he was urged to sail at once. The young republic was in great danger; the Spaniards threatened Valparaiso by sea, they had regained a portion of the land, were organising bands of savage Indian marauders, and they yet held the whole of Peru. On the 28th November, 1818, Lord Cochrane, with his wife and his two children, landed at Valparaiso. After an enthusiastic reception, which was prolonged somewhat too long to please Cochrane, he proceeded to inspect the fleet. It consisted but of six vessels, the largest with fifty-six and the smallest with sixteen guns. "Although deficient in organization and equipment, it was very creditable to the energy of a newly-emancipated people." After a considerable deal of intrigue against Cochrane, promoted by English and other sailors of fortune who had preceded him, he was formally appointed Admiral of the Chilian fleet. On the 22nd December, he hoisted his flag. On the 16th January, 1819, he set out with four vessels, leaving

his Chilian Vice-Admiral, Blanco, to follow with three others. Lady Cochrane had come down from Santiago to Valparaiso, to take leave of her husband. She had just gone ashore, and the gun to summon all hands on board had been fired, when she heard a loud hurrah. She went to the window, and saw her eldest son, the present Earl of Dundonald, then a boy five years old, mounted on the shoulders of his father's flag lieutenant, waving his cap, and shouting with all his might, "Viva la Patria," while the mob lustily cheered him in return. The child had slipped out of the house, and finding the lieutenant, insisted on being carried to his father. To Lady Cochrane's alarm, she saw her son hurried down to the beach, and before she could interfere, placed in a boat and rowed off. The flag-ship was under weigh, so that he could not be set ashore again. There was no alternative but that he should accompany his father. He had no clothes fit for a voyage, but the sailors had supplied the deficiency, and attended to all his wants with great care and pride.

Cochrane resolved to attack the Spanish fleet in Callao harbour. It was the height of the Carnival, when the authorities would be less vigilant than usual. The task, nevertheless, was difficult enough to satisfy Cochrane to the full. He had against him two frigates, a corvette, three brigs, a schooner, twenty-eight gun boats, and six well-armed merchantmen. They all lay close under batteries mounting 160 guns, while the vessels themselves carried 350. Cochrane could not command more than 220. Under the protection of a fog Lord Cochrane hazarded a general attack. After two hours heavy cannonading, he had

only succeeded in silencing the fire of one angle of one of the forts. He reluctantly retired out of range.

When the firing commenced, Cochrane had locked his boy into the after-cabin. The bold child did not like this restraint; he climbed through the quarter gallery window, joined his father on deck, and refused to go down again. His father naïvely says, "I could not attend to him; he was permitted to remain, and, in a miniature midshipman's uniform, which the seamen had made for him, was busying himself in handing powder to the gunners." We must let Lord Cochrane finish the story in his own words. We are extracting from his narrative of *Services in South America*, published in 1859.

"While thus employed, a round shot took off the head of a marine close to him, scattering the unlucky man's brains in his face. Instantly recovering his self-possession, to my great relief, for, believing him killed, I was spell-bound with agony, he ran up to me exclaiming, 'I am not hurt, papa; the shot did not touch me: Jack says, the ball is not made that can kill mama's boy.' I ordered him to be carried below; but, resisting with all his might, he was permitted to remain on deck during the action."

After some trifling interchanges of shot, on two or three successive occasions, Cochrane made up his mind that it was impossible to succeed in a regular engagement. He resolved to revert to his memorable expedient of an explosive vessel. Unfortunately, just when she was within musket shot of the Spaniards, they struck her with a round shot, and foundered her. This having failed, Cochrane retired to Huacho

with his squadron, leaving only one vessel to watch Callao. For some time, he occupied himself in a course which develops no incident worthy of narration. The sinews of war were deficient, and his main object was to seize Spanish vessels containing treasure. In this he was very successful, taking care to pay the inhabitants well for the information which led to his captures. On the 5th of May, he returned to Callao, but attempted no further attack, being quite content that his fame and the fear entertained of him by the Spaniards (who had dubbed him "El Diablo") availed to keep their respectable fleet locked up uselessly in harbour. After a cruise, in which he made valuable captures of provisions and military stores, he returned to Valparaiso. This further positive result had been accomplished. He had become assured that the Peruvians were well disposed to the Chilians, and anxious to be freed, if the work were done for them. This was a sufficient basis for future operations. We shall not attempt to narrate these at anything approaching full length, but content ourselves with recording the most important results, and the most interesting incidents which occurred while they were being attained.

Hardly had Lady Cochrane's child been returned to her embrace, when her own life also was very nearly sacrificed. Her husband was absent, and she herself alone and unprotected in a country house, which she had made her residence. A desperado, in the pay of the Spanish government, gained admission to her apartment, and swore that he would kill her on the spot if she did not reveal her husband's secret orders. She at once declared that she would divulge nothing,

hurriedly picking, at the same time, a document from the table. The ruffian attempted to seize it; and before her attendants could arrive, she had been wounded by a dagger. The wretch was seized, tried, and sentenced to be executed. In the dead of the night, before his life was to be taken, Lady Cochrane was wakened by piteous wailings below her window. Sending out a servant to ascertain who it was, she was told it was the doomed man's wife, imploring her to use her influence to obtain a reversal of that part of the sentence which had condemned her husband to die unabsolved. Lady Cochrane, touched and forgiving, undertook the task at once, and not only succeeded in satisfying this wish, but had the sentence of death commuted to one of perpetual banishment.

Lord Cochrane made another attempt on Callao. It completely failed, but from no fault of his. His instructions—and galling to him they must have been—were framed “to prevent him from doing anything rash.” A quantity of rockets, which he had with great difficulty prevailed on the government to supply, turned out quite worthless; and at the last moment he was disappointed of a supply of troops on which he had counted.

The Chilian people, he at this time found out, “expected impossibilities.” He had “been for some time revolving a plan to achieve one which should gratify them.” He “had now only one ship, so that there were no other inclinations (than his own) to consult.” He was lucky in having an excellent English colleague, thus photographed by Lord Cochrane in his narrative. “I felt quite sure of Major Miller's concurrence where there was any fighting to be done;

though a ball in the arm, another through the chest, passing out at his back, and a left hand shattered for life, were not very promising fighting incentives as far as physical force was concerned ; yet the moral courage of my gallant guest was untouched, and his capacity to carry out my plans was greater than before, as being more matured by sharp experience."

Valdivia was the strongest place in all Chili. It was deemed impregnable, and was in the hands of the Spaniards. Cochrane resolved to reconnoitre it in his flag-ship. On the 18th of January (1820), he arrived before the place to reconnoitre, hoisting Spanish colours, and signalling for a pilot. The pilot came off, with an officer and four soldiers. They were received on board, and at once made prisoners. The pilot was commanded to steer the *O'Higgins* (Cochrane's ship) into the channel leading to the forts in advance of the chief citadel of Valdivia. The officer and the four soldiers, thinking it best to make the most of their position, gave all the information they could. Among other news, they informed Cochrane that a Spanish war brig, the *Petrillo*, was daily expected to arrive with money for the garrison.

Meanwhile the commandant was getting alarmed at the detention of his five men. A heavy fire was suddenly opened from the forts. Cochrane did not reply to it, but retired, his reconnaissance having been satisfactorily completed. He kept a sharp look out for the *Petrillo*. She hove in sight on the 21st. She came quite close, being deceived by Cochrane's Spanish colours. He took her without firing a shot, and found on board 20,000 dollars, and some important despatches.

Nothing could be done against Valdivia without soldiers. From an English gentleman, also in the Chilian service, Cochrane procured 250 men, commanded by a brave Frenchman, Major Beauchof; as also a brig and a schooner. Still, there were great difficulties to be encountered, within Cochrane's own force as well as behind the walls of Valdivia. He had only two naval officers on board his flag-ship. Of these, one was under arrest for disobedience of orders, whilst the other could not perform the duties of lieutenant: "So that," says Cochrane, "I had to act as admiral, captain, and lieutenant, taking my turn in the watch—or rather, being constantly on the watch—as the only available officer was incompetent."

On the night of the 29th, the three vessels lay off the island of Quiriquina, in a dead calm. Cochrane, thoroughly fatigued, had lain down to rest; he had left the ship in the charge of his lieutenant; he, too, had retired to rest, surrendering the watch to the care of a midshipman, and he also had fallen asleep. Cochrane had left strict orders to be woken the instant a breeze sprung up, for the situation of the ship was dangerous. A breeze did spring up; but Cochrane's order was neglected, and he was not wakened. A sudden wind took the ship unawares; the incompetent midshipman attempted to bring her round. He ran her right upon the sharp edge of a rock, where she was beaten about, suspended upon her keel. Cochrane was awakened, only to find matters in this condition. They were forty miles from the mainland, and the brig and schooner were both out of sight. With great difficulty he enforced obedience to his command

to the crew, that they should not abandon the ship. The first sounding gave five feet water in the hold, and the pumps were in wretched repair. The carpenter knew nothing about repairing pumps. Cochrane, adding the carpenter's to his other duties, took off his coat, set to work, and by midnight had the pumps in working order. Still the water continued to gain, although the whole crew, which numbered six hundred, were baling it out with buckets. The leak did not increase, the officers insisted upon ascertaining its size; but Cochrane would not permit this, for the discovery, he knew, would dispirit the men. He commenced wearing off the ship, persuaded that she could be kept afloat until she arrived at Valdivia. This, he says, "was the chief point to be regarded, the capture of the fortress being my object, after which the ship might be repaired at leisure."

The powder-magazine having been under water, all the ammunition, except a little that was on deck and a few rounds in the cartouche-boxes of the soldiers, was rendered useless. This rather pleased Cochrane, "as it involved the necessity of using the bayonet in an anticipated attack, and to facing this weapon the Spaniards had, in every case, evinced a rooted aversion."

Before making land, they came in with the other two vessels. Cochrane shifted his flag to the schooner, *Montezuma*; ordering the *O'Higgins* to keep out of sight of land, for she would be recognised again, and alarm the garrison. It fell calm, or he would have landed at once and taken the Spaniards by surprise. How desirable it was that the attack should be sudden, will at once appear from the description of the



fortifications of Valdivia. They were placed on both sides of a channel only three-quarters of a mile broad. They commanded the entrance of the channel, the anchorage, and the river leading to the town. Their fire crossed in all directions. In all, there were fifteen forts, one being on an island which commanded the entrance of the channel. With the exception of one landing-place, surf made the shore inaccessible.

On the afternoon of the 3rd of February, the brig and schooner anchored off the guns of Fort Ingles, which covered the landing-place. The swell was so heavy, that disembarkation was impossible. Cochrane's troops were kept carefully out of sight; and he was ready with a story of having just arrived from Cadiz, and being in want of a pilot. He signalled ashore to this effect. In reply, he was told to send a boat for one. He rejoined, that all the vessel's boats had been washed away in the passage round Cape Horn. This did not quite satisfy the Spaniards. The pilot was not sent; they commenced to fire alarm-guns, and began to concentrate troops at the landing-place. Most unfortunately, one of Cochrane's boats, which had been insufficiently fastened on the lee side of one of his vessels, drifted astern. This revealed all, and Fort Ingles at once opened fire. Two of the crew of the *Intrepido* brig were killed at the first discharge. There was now only the choice to land in spite of the dangerous swell, or to retire. Cochrane at once selected the former alternative. He had only two launches and a gig. He took the command of the gig. Major Miller took one launch, with forty-four men. He took the lead, and landed; telling his men not to fire, but charge with the bayonet, to which the

Spaniards would not stand. The disembarkation went quickly on, and in less than an hour three hundred men were on shore.

The next—and the most difficult—thing was to take the forts. And Fort Ingles came first. The only approach to it was a precipitous foot-path, which was so narrow that the men could only advance in single file. The attack was, therefore, deferred until it was dark. A picked party—one of the Spanish prisoners accompanying them as guide—were dispatched as the van. They reached the outside of the fort unheard and unopposed. When this advanced body had taken up its position the whole miniature army advanced, cheering and firing in the air—this last being done to let the Spaniards know that powder and shot were disdained, and that the appeal was to be to the bayonet. While this shouting and firing were going on, and the Spaniards were quite harmlessly—for they could not see their assailants—discharging both cannon and musketry, Ensign Vidal got under the inland flank of the fort with a few men, and, without being discerned, tore up some palisades. With these he made a bridge over the ditch. He and his party noiselessly crossed, and formed under the cover of some trees. The first intimation of their presence was furnished by a volley in the Spaniard's flank. This settled the business at once. Without staying a moment to discover what was the number of their new assailants, they took to flight, left the fort, and succeeded in frightening 300 more men who were drawn up behind it. Cochrane's men followed close upon their heels, bayoneted them by dozens, and chased the survivors from fort to fort

The gates of each were opened to admit the fugitives, but Cochrane's men rushed in with them, and thus gained possession of two or three forts. A show of defence was made by the force of the Castle of Conal, augmented as it was by those who had escaped from the forts now in Cochrane's hands. Without staying to rest his men, he stormed it, driving out the garrison, some of whom escaped into the forest, others pulled off in boats up the river to Valdivia. A hundred dead were found next morning in this fort alone. Cochrane had only seven men slain in all.

On the 5th the *Intrepido* and *Montezuma* entered the harbour, and anchored under Castle Conal. On the same day the *O'Higgins* appeared in view. Whenever it was seen, the Spaniards abandoned the eastern forts, being those on the side opposite to those taken by Cochrane. It turned out that the *O'Higgins* was of no further use. The injury sustained at Quiriquina proved irreparable. The *Intrepido*, too, grounded on a bank, was bilged by the surf, and finally became a wreck. There remained only the *Montezuma* to support the troops in their attack on Valdivia. To the great surprise of Cochrane it turned out that the services of neither schooner nor soldiers were required. On the morning of the 6th he received a messenger with a flag of truce. He brought word that the Spanish garrison had abandoned the town, after plundering the arsenal and private houses. They had committed great disorders, and the inhabitants were in consternation. Cochrane soon made them feel assured that they had nothing to fear from him, and

they gladly welcomed him and his troops within their gates.

Thus did he gain for the Chilians the only spot of their soil on the South American continent which had remained in Spanish possession.

## CHAPTER XVI.

FINAL YEARS OF FIGHTING : IN SOUTH AMERICAN AND  
GREEK WATERS.

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A.D. 1820—1827.

Unsuccessful attempt against the Island of Chiloe—Cochrane's thanks for the capture of Valdivia—Proposes to attack Callao—Is refused co-operation, and resolves himself to cut the *Esmeralda* out of the harbour—The difficulties of the enterprise—His proclamation to his men—A redundancy of volunteers—The mid-night attack—A sharp tussle—Cochrane wounded—Is fired upon from the city—A "signal" device—Cochrane and an outspoken Chilean lady—How he paid his men their arrears of pay—Courage of Lady Cochrane in action—Cochrane retires from Chili, and enters the service of Brazil—His services to that country, and his reward—The cost of what he did for Chili—Effects of his deeds in South America upon the trade of England—Cochrane is invited to command the fleet of the patriot Greeks—Divided counsels—Cochrane advises the study of Demosthenes—He infuses vigour into the national cause—Unsuccessful attempt to raise the siege of Athens—A narrow escape for life—A chase after his own ships—Minor deeds—The battle of Navarino suddenly ends his occupation—The last of Cochrane's fighting.

PRIOR to the capture of Valdivia, that position had been the strongest still held by Spain in Chilean territory. The island of Chiloe approached it most nearly in importance. Cochrane now set himself to win it for the republican insurgents. When he brought

his vessels of war before it, he found that its attack would be an enterprise too arduous even for his daring and the devotion of his subordinates. He tried what was with him a rare expedient,—he attempted to induce the occupying force to mutiny against their leaders. Here, as also in one sharp engagement which he risked, he was foiled. The Spaniards had with them a considerable number of priests. In action they led the devotee soldiers, one hand being armed with a lance, the other wielding a crucifix aloft. And to the recent attempts of Cochrane's emissaries, they opposed the same potent influence over the minds of their flock. Cochrane had no alternative but to retire.

He returned to Valparaiso, the capital, making there his first appearance since his illustrious conduct at Valdivia. The populace, who were more given to idle and protracted festivities than he liked, received him with an ovation. Very different was his reception by the head men of the state. Distracted among themselves by mutual dissensions, dictated by the individual ambition of supremacy and aggrandisement, they all found a common ground in jealousy of, and opposition to, Cochrane. It happened that Cochrane had directly broken the order of one of the ministers by attacking Valdivia at all. In the mind of this functionary, the success and fruits of the exploit, did not outweigh and atone for the disobedience of orders. He actually talked of having the saviour of his state tried by court-martial. He said the attack of Valdivia was "the act of a madman; that Cochrane deserved to have lost his life in the assault; and even now ought to lose his head for daring to attack such a place without instructions,

and exposing the patriot troops to such hazard." There were further fruits of the achievement than the mere strategic gain to the insurgents. England already looked sympathisingly upon the struggle; all the more so, that her own illustrious son was so prominently engaged in it. The capture of Valdivia, when it became known in this country, rendered to Chili the very important service of causing the moneyed English to believe in the ultimate success of the patriots. The latter had before made fruitless attempts to borrow money in the English market. But their credit was now established; and they easily, and on favourable terms, obtained a loan of a million pounds.

Cochrane, who had effected this, was meanwhile entirely unrewarded for his service. Neither he nor his men received a penny of reward. They were even mulcted of the prizes which they had taken, and which were theirs by right. Their captures were sold, and the proceeds appropriated to the national treasury. Cochrane made no complaint or claim, but his seamen almost mutinied. In their behalf, Cochrane expostulated with the Government. Again he was insolently threatened with a court-martial for insubordination. This was rather too much. He threatened to throw up his command. This brought them to their senses. They feared to lose him; although, by every intrigue, they tried to cripple his freedom and disparage his services. They made large promises, revealing their own nature by offering to Cochrane personal benefactions, if he would withdraw his claim on account of his men: they asked him to accept an estate. He answered that he would take nothing

until his men's claims were discharged, and advised them to sell the proffered estate and apply the proceeds towards the payment of their arrears. The men were paid; but only their wages, nothing being given on account of prizes. Cochrane then accepted the estate. This, however, he did not long enjoy. Immediately after he ceased to serve the Chilian Government, his agent was forcibly expelled, and his lands taken possession of.

During these negotiations, Cochrane had necessarily been compelled to inaction. The above partial settlement having been accomplished, he at once returned to the work of attacking his old enemies—and friends—the Spaniards. He proposed the attack of the port of Callao. His offer was provisionally accepted: but in case of further “rashness,” he was saddled with a coadjutor, and entrusted with only a divided command of the expedition. When the fleet arrived off its destination, Cochrane urged the instant disembarkation of the troops; his colleague (or superior) emphatically declined. Cochrane formed the bold design of undertaking the attack himself with the three vessels which were under his sole authority. To attack the city would have been madness; but there lay in the harbour, the *Esmeralda*, a valuable frigate, and a treasure-ship, which was known to the Chilians to have a million dollars on board. These vessels, with others, lay close under the guns of Callao. The shore batteries mounted 300 pieces, the *Esmeralda* herself was “magnificently armed; and she lay behind a strong boom with chain moorings. The boom was covered by armed blockships, and around all were distributed twenty-seven gun-boats.



Against such a concentration of force only stratagem could prevail. Cochrane resolved to make his prizes by cutting them out at night. He gave three days to reconnoitering, reflection, and contrivance, and fixed the 5th of November for the attempt. On that day he issued this address to his men:—

“Marines and seamen, this night we are going to give the enemy a mortal blow. To-morrow you will present yourselves proudly before Callao, and all your comrades will envy your good fortune. One hour of courage and resolution is all that is required of you to triumph. Remember that you have conquered in Valdivia, and be not afraid of those who have hitherto fled from you.

“The value of all the vessels contained in Callao will be yours, and the same reward in money will be distributed among you as has been offered by the Spaniards in Lima, to those who should capture any of the Chilian squadron. The moment of glory is approaching, and I hope that the Chilenos will fight as they have been accustomed to do, and that the English will act as they have ever done at home and abroad.

“COCHRANE.”

Cochrane's plan was very simple. He was to lead himself. Only a certain proportion of his men were to man the boats; he drew them up, and asked volunteers to come forward. Every man offered himself. His captains made selection of 160 seamen and 80 marines. They were distributed in seventeen boats, which were drawn up after dark before Cochrane's flag-ship. Each man was armed with

cutlass and pistol, and clad in white, with a blue badge on the arm, for the purpose of recognition after the boats separated. At ten o'clock they started, in two divisions, one commanded by Cochrane's flag-captain, Crosbie, the other by Captain Guise. Cochrane himself led and commanded the whole. His orders were to keep the strictest silence, and to use nothing but the cutlass until he gave a counter order. The night was dark and favourable, and the oars were muffled. Just about midnight they made the boom, in which they succeeded in discovering a small opening. Here for the first time, they fell in with some of the enemy. Cochrane's launch ran against a guard boat. Before its crew could give the alarm, Cochrane threatened them with instant death if they made the slightest noise. They made no reply, seeing that they had no choice but to keep silence. Nothing else occurred until Cochrane drew up his boat alongside the *Esmeralda*. In a trice, his men were scrambling up her sides. The surprise was perfect, every man save the sentries being in his hammock. When they heard the scuffle with the few men on watch, the crew rushed on deck and made a most gallant stand immediately after recovering their first surprise. Beaten from point to point, they at last stood firm on the forecastle. They had to be charged thrice ere they fell back, and even then they fought for a few minutes on the quarter-deck. All the marines and a large portion of the seamen were put *hors de combat*; the rest leapt overboard, or into the hold.

Cochrane boarded by the main-chains; just when he was vaulting over the bulwark, he was knocked down by the butt-end of a seaman's musket. He fell

on a thole-pin of his boat ; it entered his back near the spine, inflicting a severe injury which caused him years of suffering. Having regained his footing, he re-ascended the side. He was hardly on deck before he was shot through the thigh. He bound up his new wound with a handkerchief, and had, he laconically says, "great difficulty to get on." The whole thing was done in a quarter of an hour. Eleven of Cochrane's men were killed, and thirty wounded. The Spaniards in all lost a hundred and sixty men. A device, which our readers will remember answered so well in the capture of the *Gamo*, was on this occasion adopted by Cochrane. He had instructed certain of his men, whenever they got on board, to ascend the rigging. The encounter was hardly over, when he hailed aloft, and was answered by small parties of his own men, from the fore and main tops.

The uproar of the capture alarmed the garrison of Callao. They at once opened fire upon the *Esmeralda*. This was a most wanton and cruel act, for however quickly the capture could have taken place, when the first shots were fired, the Spaniards ashore must have known that their own countrymen must have been still on board. It was at the same time an act most complimentary to Cochrane ; for it involved a belief that the *Esmeralda* was in his possession.

It was by no means pleasant for Cochrane and his men, who did not know very well how to get the *Esmeralda* out of the harbour, now they had her, and who also wished to effect more captures ere they retired, to be pounded at by the garrison. Cochrane had foreseen and provided for this. An English and a United States man-of-war lay in the harbour.

Cochrane had observed that they hoisted, each night, lights of a particular colour. He inferred that they had been advised to do so, so as to ensure their safety in case of a night attack. He had prepared, and now hung out from the *Esmeralda*, a signal exactly identical. This greatly perplexed the garrison. They did not know which of the three lights to fire at. By good luck they ceased to fire at the *Esmeralda*, though the other two were several times struck. Cochrane, immediately after the capture of the *Esmeralda* was completed, had been compelled by his wounds to retire from the command. His flag-captain took his place. He mis-managed matters. By his negligence, the sailors broke into the spirit room and got drunk, and little was done in the way of captures. Still, several vessels of minor tonnage were added to the *Esmeralda*.

The cutting out of the *Esmeralda*, which ranks among Cochrane's exploits, in the judgment of professional critics, in the same place as the capture of the *Gamo* and the action in the Basque Roads, brought Cochrane more popular acclamation and more jealousy and intrigue in high places. By many of the inhabitants he was by this time regarded as a horrible, though useful, human monster, so thoroughly had the representations of the rivals which he had eclipsed affected the popular mind. One native lady, on being introduced to him, naïvely said to him that she was surprised to find him "a gentleman and a rational being, and not the ferocious brute she had been taught to consider him"!

In the next year, 1821, matters became worse. San Martin, the chief leader of the Chilians, had

been engaged in the endeavour to free the neighbouring territory of Peru. Early in the year he threw off the mask of republicanism, and by a *coup d'état* made himself Dictator of Peru. This injured both the insurgent armies; the Spanish fortunes began to revive. Meanwhile, Cochrane and his men were again deeply in the national books as creditors. Cochrane was advised of the presence of large sums in a yacht of San Martin, pilfered from the Chilian treasury, and destined for the advancement of his treacherous ends in Peru. Cochrane boldly seized it, discharged all private claims which were sufficiently proved, and appropriated the remainder to the just demands of his men. He took not a single dollar for himself. No more work was cut out for him. He was invited, it is true, to overthrow the usurper, San Martin, but he wisely declined to take any part in the civil discords which sprung out of the work of liberation in which he had taken so decisive and sufficient a part. He was the more confirmed in his determination to leave the Chilian service, that he was in this year invited by the insurgent Brazilians to perform for them the same services against the Portuguese that he had so well discharged for Chili and Peru against the Spaniards. Ere we briefly proceed to notice Cochrane's engagement on the Atlantic side of the continent, we cannot refrain from citing the following incident of his career on the shores of the Pacific, which we extract from a recent article in the *North British Review*. "During the whole of Lord Dundonald's arduous services and romantic adventures in South America, Lady Dundonald accompanied him, to soothe his anxieties, to sustain his hopes, to animate

his exertions, to share his dangers. One night, whilst he was in command of the Chilian fleet, his ship got becalmed under a battery, from which he was assailed with red-hot shot. His men were seized with a panic, and deserted their guns. If the fire from the shore was not returned it would speedily become steady, sustained, and fatal. He went down to the cabin where she lay :—‘ If a woman sets them the example, they may be shamed out of their fears ; it is our only chance.’ She rose and followed him upon the deck. We have heard her relate that the first object that met her eye was the battery with its flaming furnaces, round which dark figures were moving, looking more like incarnate demons than men. A glance at her husband’s impressive features, and his ‘ terrible ’ calmness, reassured her. She took the match, and fired a gun when he had pointed it. The effect on the crew was electrical ; they returned to their posts with a shout, and the battery was speedily silenced.”

Were it necessary to multiply proofs of so amply demonstrated a thesis, the high value of Cochrane as a naval fighting man is sufficiently established by the fact that wherever war broke out, or where peoples and provinces were to be freed from alien despotism, Cochrane’s services were solicited. Whenever the contagion of liberty spread across the continent, from the Andes to the mouths of the Amazon and Orinoco, Cochrane was summoned. And when, after a short respite in England, the Greeks began to entertain the desire to meet their Turkish oppressors on the sea, his services were again solicited. In a few sentences we may dismiss these chapters of Cochrane’s life. They present little or no matter of interest. Yet this biography,

although necessarily succinct, would be incomplete were they entirely passed over.

Cochrane did not so much lead or organize the navy of Brazil as create it. With his squadron he expelled all Portuguese armaments from the eastern shores of South America. He also enriched the young state by the capture of many ships of war and merchant vessels, several millions of dollars, and various kinds of valuable property. Only thirty years after his ungrateful summary dismissal from the Brazilian service were his claims to reward recognized; then only in consequence of the very strong representations of the English foreign secretary, Lord Palmerston. Even then he received only half the simple interest of what he had been promised when he had been urgently solicited to undertake the service. It was not until 1845, twenty-three years after his services in the liberation of Chili, that that republic had been induced to liquidate a portion of his claim. In the interval he had been a loser to the extent of £25,000, won in litigation in the English courts by the owners of merchantmen which he had captured in Chilian waters, acting under the authority of the Chilian government. In spite of this loss made in their behalf, the Chilians granted him only £6,000. When he balanced his Chilian and Brazilian accounts, he found that his losses were just met. The combined sums which he received from Brazil and Chili just covered the amounts assessed against him as damages and costs.

Besides the service to freedom which his exploits in South America effected, he was the means of doing much for the trade of the world, and especially of England. The Spanish rulers of South America had

prohibited all trade except with their own country. The first act of these colonies, when they became independent, was to open their ports and mighty rivers to the whole world. To Lord Dundonald England is largely indebted this day for the large import and export trade which she does with Brazil and the South American republics.

The story of Lord Cochrane's services in behalf of the insurgent Greeks may be very briefly dismissed. For he was just beginning to get his squadron into a proper condition, when the Great Powers interfered, "the untoward event" occurred in the Bay of Navarino, and the work of Hellenic emancipation was effected. In 1826 he was invited by the Greek leaders and the Hellenic committee to take the command of their fleet. He was to have £37,000 paid down, and £20,000 more when the national deliverance was complete. He arrived at the scene of hostilities in March, 1827. Ere long he found his vigour and his plans paralysed by the incapacity and cupidity of the insurgents. Six campaigns had already elapsed, and when he arrived the Greeks were depressed by the fall of Missolonghi, after its long and heroic defence. Cochrane advised the squabbling Council to read in full congress the First Philippic of Demosthenes, and apply its teachings to their own case. For, he said, it contained an apt and eloquent lesson on their present duties. He told them that if their discords did not at once cease, he would leave them to their own devices. His emphatic speaking was successful. They appointed the aged Count of Capo d'Istria president, and he volunteered to fight under Cochrane wherever he chose to lead. Cochrane re-



solved to make a strenuous effort for the relief of Athens, which was closely hemmed in by Turkish besiegers. General Church was endeavouring to raise the siege by land operations—occupying a fortified camp on the Phalerus. Cochrane lay off the Port of Piræus, with a large number of vessels, manned by Hydriots and Spezziots. After some delay and reconnoitering, Church and he concerted a night attack. It was well carried into execution, but defeated by a thorough rout inflicted on the Greeks by a powerful body of Turkish cavalry, which suddenly broke from the Moslem lines and attacked just as the enterprise seemed certain of success. The assailants were thoroughly defeated. The repulse was so complete that Cochrane owed his life to a precipitate flight, and he had the utmost difficulty in regaining his ship by swimming.

After the fight under the Acropolis, complete disorganisation ensued ; the army suddenly broke up, the Hydriots left Cochrane and returned to their islands. Cochrane ran after his men, cruising about in the *Ægean*. But he found his personal authority and his official command-in-chief extremely unsubstantial. When he ordered the ships to join him, some captains took time for further consideration ; others, who, as frequently happened, were themselves owners of the vessels they commanded, weighed anchor, and went in pursuit of their own particular objects. He sailed, however, with the *Hellas*, and a few brigs and lesser craft. In the Gulf of Chiarenza he fell in with two Turkish corvettes, which, after a short action, succeeded in making their escape. On the 20th of May he took a brig laden with powder and provisions, by

hoisting Austrian colours, and enticing her Captain on board his ship. A few days afterwards he took his station off Navarino, to watch the fleet of Ibrahim Pasha, which, with his solitary frigate, he could not venture to attack. In the beginning of June he steered for the coast of Egypt, and appeared off Alexandria, with the intention of destroying the fleet which the Pasha was preparing to use against the Greeks of the Morea. The Pasha sailed out to offer him battle, but the Greeks dared not accept the engagement, and made their way back to Poros and Hydra. While lying there, Cochrane learned the tidings of Navarino, and found that his occupation was gone.

The above brief summary contains all that we have succeeded in collecting from every accessible authority. We have furnished it, not on account of its interest or importance, but merely that we might not omit the last acts of Cochrane afloat and in war. After Navarino, he never commanded a ship in action, or in time of war. The cause of this was simple and sufficient. In subsequent years, up till the time at which he was an octogenarian, the world was at peace, and there was no occasion for his sword being again unsheathed.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## CLOSING YEARS OF REPOSE AND REDRESS.

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A. D. 1827—1860.

The plan and purpose of this work reviewed—Lord Cochrane did not re-enter public life—Never again sat in either House of Parliament—Last years and death of his father, by which Lord Cochrane succeeds to the Earldom of Dundonald—Lord Dundonald restored to his naval rank—His further promotion, and employment as Admiral—His equitable claim to arrears of pay—His addiction to science—His secret plans revived during the Crimean war—Lord Dundonald as an author—His Autobiography—His death—The lessons of his life—No need of eulogy—His personal appearance—Dundonald and Douglas Jerrold—His interment in Westminster Abbey—Why his sons preferred that resting-place to St. Paul's—The funeral and its incidents—Concluding remarks.

OUR work is now nearly done. Our self-appointed and most willingly undertaken task was begun and has been carried out with the single purpose of discharging faithfully our twofold duty—to the memory of the subject of the biography, and to its readers. The statements contained in the past pages have been gathered from considerably more than a hundred separate authorities. The great, prominent acts of Lord Dundonald's career have, each one of them, been the themes of almost endless dispute. We have made it our care to consult, and weigh, every publication

bearing upon our subject, from the works in which Lord Dundonald narrated passages of his own life, down to fugitive pamphlets, reports of trials, and old volumes of such periodicals as *Cobbett's Register* (the author of which was ever faithful to his friend in good and bad repute) and the *Naval Chronicle*. We have abstained from obtruding any pretentious and authoritative judgments of our own, trying rather to furnish the materials and considerations which should go to form opinion, than to furnish any conclusive verdict of our own. What remains to be written involves no such search for, and collation of, various and conflicting narratives and representations. A very few references to the ordinary manuals of encyclopædic biography, a few citations from the official handbooks of the naval service, and from the better informed periodicals which furnished a few months since sketches of the English hero just deceased, will suffice for the completion of our task.

Lord Cochrane did not again enter public life. He had resigned his seat for Westminster when he first sailed for South America. He did not seek, on his return from Greece, the suffrages of his old constituents; and we do not find that he took any part in the great agitation for reform which was beginning to be vigorously carried on when he finally retired from warlike engrossments. By the death of his aged father, in 1831, he inherited his ancestral title, and became tenth Earl of Dundonald, in the peerage of Scotland. He never sat in the Upper House, his compatriot peers never doing themselves the honour to return him as one of their representatives. The latter years of his father had been spent in poverty.

His son had assisted him to the extent of many thousand pounds, previous to the Stock Exchange trial. About that time, the old Earl, who was alleged to have sunk into the dissipated habits which exercise so strong a temptation over the minds of disappointed men, had been prevailed on by the conspirators in high places against his son's good name to publish the most unfounded charges against him. From that date there would seem to have been a thorough estrangement between father and son. In 1823, the old Earl was put on the pension list of the Literary Fund. The following is extracted from the Annual Address issued by that body to its subscribers in that year:—

“A man born in the high class of the old British peerage has devoted his acute and investigating mind solely to the prosecution of science; and his powers have prevailed in the pursuit. The discoveries effected by his scientific research, with its direction altogether to utility, have been in many instances beneficial to the community, and in many have been the sources of wealth to individuals. To himself alone they have been unprofitable; for, with a superior disdain, or (if you will) a culpable disregard of the goods of fortune, he has scattered around him the produce of his intellect with a lavish and wild hand. If we may use the consecrated words of an apostle, ‘though poor, he hath made many rich’; and though in the immediate neighbourhood of wealth, he has been doomed to suffer through a long series of laborious years the severities of want. In his advanced age he found an estimable woman (Anna Maria Plowden, daughter of the well-known historian of Ireland), in poverty, it is true,

like himself, but of unspotted character, and of high though untitled family, to participate the calamity of his fortunes; and with her virtues and prudence, assisted by a small pension which she obtained from the liberality of the Crown, she threw a gleam of light over the dark decline of his day. She was soon, however, torn from him by death, and, with an infant whom she bequeathed to him, he was abandoned to destitution and distress—for the pension was extinguished with her life. To this man, thus favoured by nature, and thus persecuted by fortune, we have been happy to offer some alleviation of his sorrows, and to prevent him from breathing his last under the oppressive sense of the ingratitude of his species.”

He died in Paris, on the 1st of July, 1831, at the age of eighty-three. From his father, we are informed, the late earl inherited nothing but the ruined castle of Dundonald, in Renfrewshire, and about forty acres surrounding it, which were mortgaged to their full value.

Ever since the Stock Exchange trial, Lord Dundonald had remained under the disgrace, and the pecuniary loss, attendant upon his depreciation of rank, which had then been decreed by the Admiralty. In the interval of years, many who had believed him guilty, became convinced of his innocence. And there was a growing feeling that he ought to be reinstated in his professional position. The act of righteous redress was not, however, executed until the year 1830. Certain writers, attached to the Whig party, give the credit of this act of justice to the Reform Ministry. Doubtless, an administration, in which Brougham was Chancellor, which was presided over by Coch-

rane's friend, Earl Grey, and supported by such believers in his innocence as Earl Fortescue, would be naturally disposed to remove the iniquitous stigma. We incline to think, however, that the merit must be given to the sailor king, William IV., who ascended the throne in the same year that witnessed the advent of the Whigs to power. The inquiry is not of much moment. The fact remains, that on the 22nd May, 1830, the name of Captain Lord Cochrane once more appeared on the books of the Admiralty. He had, of course sacrificed all pay, and all chances of promotion, in the years intervening between 1814 and 1830. We cannot forbear remarking that the family of the late Earl have, this day, an equitable claim against the State for the amount of pay of which their father was deprived during these years—not to speak of the £1,000 which he was fined by Lord Ellenborough. It so happens that an apt precedent applies to the case. General Sir Robert Wilson, the Radical member for Southwark, was deprived of his rank for a series of years for taking part in the funeral of Queen Caroline, which was attended with a violent popular tumult. Like his friend, Lord Cochrane, he was eventually restored to his position; and he received, on his restoration, the full amount of pay due to him for the period of his disgrace. In fact, it follows necessarily, that the mere act of restoration, if it were defensible, involves with it the recognition of the pecuniary claim. There is the stronger need to dwell on this point, arising from the well-understood fact that Lord Dundonald left little or nothing behind him in the shape of property of any kind. His country is deeply in his debt. He fought our battles,

in very many different ways, not only without reward, but at great loss and sacrifice to himself. For the most that he did, it were impossible to assess pecuniary compensation. We do not raise the question, whether the children of Dundonald be more or less worthy of a national provision than the descendants of the wantons of Charles II., or the favourites of William III. But we cannot think that we exceed our fair function, in incorporating with our narrative the statement of a claim, the recognition and liquidation of which would be nothing more than bare justice.

Lord Dundonald gained certain steps of rank ere he died. In 1841 he became Vice Admiral of the Blue; in 1851, Vice Admiral of the White; and in 1854, Rear Admiral of the United Kingdom, which was the rank he held at his decease. It would seem obvious that when, in 1830, it was decided that he was worthy to re-enter the service, he equally merited re-admission into the Order of the Bath. For any remaining stain or suspicion which should perpetuate his exclusion from the latter, would be equally destructive of his fitness to hold the commission of his sovereign. Although this is so, many years elapsed ere his honours were fully restored. It was not till 1847 that he was reinstated as a Knight Commander of the Bath. In the succeeding year he was appointed by Queen Victoria to the only command he ever held for England after his exploit in the Basque Roads. He was gazetted as Admiral on the West India station.

For more than the last thirty years of Lord Dundonald's life, his name was seldom breathed by the



public. He lived in seclusion, fortified against the hard blows of fortune by the consciousness of his own good intent and integrity. At rare intervals he was heard of as the inventor or improver of some scientific process or implement. This taste of his he decidedly inherited from his father. During the Crimean war, there was some discussion about his "secret plans" of naval warfare; if, indeed, it can be said that discussion could be held while the theme of dispute was shrouded in secrecy. He urged his scheme upon the Government; but they declined to adopt it, for reasons which, so far as we can judge from external and collateral evidence, seem to us to be sufficient.

Lord Dundonald thrice came before the public as an author. In 1828, he published a pamphlet, "Observations on Naval Affairs," in which, amid many reflections and suggestions of a technical strategic character, there are interspersed some narrative references to his career in South America. In 1859, he published, at considerable length, a full account of his services in Chili, Peru, and Brazil. His main object in this work was to enlist public support for his claim to further compensation from the South American States. This object to a considerable extent, detracted from the popularity of the work. The mere narrative of deeds is frequently interrupted by lengthened passages which are without interest save to that rare number of men who entertain a sympathetic sentiment for those who labour under unredressed wrongs. The last year of his life witnessed the publication of two large autobiographical volumes, in which the author told the story of his life from its commencement until the proceedings subsequent to the Stock Ex-

change Trial. The popular interest which this work excited has been very great, and remains, at the time we write, unabated. The second volume had been published only a few days, and the various literary journals were just presenting to their readers their criticisms and commendations (for the judgment was unanimously favourable), when the public were startled by the announcement of the author's death. He died on the 30th of October, 1860, at his house in Kensington.

It is not our purpose to write a eulogy of Lord Dundonald, which, indeed, would be superfluous. If we have not succeeded in presenting the leading incidents of his career in such a way as to evoke the admiration of such of our readers as may in this book become for the first time acquainted with their detail, it would be fruitless to attempt, by any comment of ours, to elicit applause. Neither shall we undertake anything in the shape of criticism upon the most disputed epochs of the life-story, nor attempt to solve the large general problem suggested by the career of the man. To some extent, in previous pages, when the occasions naturally arose, we have approached the latter position; but rather—in conformity with our well-considered plan—in the way of presenting the approximate materials for judgment, than of hazarding a decisive verdict of our own. Our narrative indicates, or ought to indicate, certain obvious reflections; some which bear by way of example, and some by way of warning, upon individual life and conduct; and some which no less distinctly affect the larger themes of polity and government. If these reflections and lessons are really, as we believe they are, obvious and

self-evident, we should be acting impertinently in pointing them out and trying to enforce them.

A recent writer thus depicts the personal appearance of Lord Dundonald:—"Fancy to yourself a broad-built Scotchman, rather seared than conquered by age, with hairs of snowy white, and a face in which intellect still beams through struggle and sorrow, and the marks of eighty years of active life. A slight stoop takes away from a height that is almost commanding. Add to these a fashion of good old-fashioned courtesy colouring the whole man, his gestures, and speech, and you have some idea of the Earl of Dundonald in 1855."

The *Athenæum*, a few days after the Earl's death, thus truthfully and tersely sums up the main features of his character and career; one statement which it contains is itself sufficient to warrant the quotation:—"His career is one of the most attractive ever offered to a biographer; for his tongue was as sharp, his pen as nimble, as his sword; and his temper was of that haughty and heroic type which, while singularly gracious and open, can endure no slight or wrong. Thus, his eighty-five years were filled with battles, protests, trials, discoveries, and recriminations. One of the most kindly and queenly acts of our Sovereign Lady was the restoration to Lord Dundonald of the honours of the Bath, of which he had been unjustly deprived. It is a fact within our personal knowledge, that when this gracious message from Windsor Castle reached the Earl, his first letter of thanks was written, not to the Sovereign or his Minister, but to Douglas Jerrold, who, by his frequent and masterly exposure of the wrong in *Punch*, and in other quarters, had been the

chief means, under Providence (as Lord Dundonald believed), of bringing the Crown to do him this great act of justice."

On the 14th of November the body of Earl Dundonald was laid in the nave of Westminster Abbey. The Government had given to his children the option of their father's interment there or in St. Paul's. Probably they might have selected the church which is also the mausoleum of the victor of Trafalgar, but they felicitously took account of their father's connection with the borough of Westminster, which had been so loyal to her member when his fortunes and fame were at the lowest, and they chose Westminster for the reception of their father's body. The funeral procession entered the Abbey by the door through which his knightly banner had been kicked in dishonour and degradation forty-six years before. Among the mourners were the Earl's old friend, counsel, and political associate, Lord Brougham. The pall was borne by the Brazilian minister, by Admiral Seymour, and other old comrades of the Earl. His four sons, each one a commissioned servant of his country, were present as chief mourners.

The interment of this illustrious English sea-king in England's noble Walhalla of glory accurately typifies the position which, without any fear of the ultimate decision of a posterity looking through the mellowing distance of time, we may safely assign him in the list of English heroes. He deserved well of his country. His misfortunes never made him sour or splenetic; he was buoyant and self-reliant, even when most overwhelmed by a combination of all that was adverse. He never despaired of or ceased to love with the most

unsullied patriotism, the republic he served so well, and which wronged him most by denying him the opportunity of further proving his devotion. He had, ere his death, the full solace of the removal of every aspersion that had for a time tarnished his name. His historic position was, ere his death, permanently defined; his life deeds were recognised as constituting a distinct and separate chapter in the annals of his land.

“A Belisarius, old and sad and poor,  
 To *our* shame, not to *his*—so he lived on,  
 Till man's allotted fourscore years were gone,  
 And scarcely then had leave to 'stablish sure

Proofs of *his* innocence, and *their* shame,  
 That had so wronged him; and, this done, came death,  
 To seal the assurance of his dying breath,  
 And wipe the last faint tarnish from his name.

At last his fame stands fair, and full of years  
 He seeks that judgment which his wrongers all  
 Have sought before him—and above his pall  
 His flag, replaced at length, waves with his peers.

He did not live to see it, but he knew  
 His country with one voice had set it high;  
 And knowing this he was content to die,  
 And leave to gracious heaven what might ensue.

Ashes to ashes! Lay the hero down:  
 No nobler heart e'er knew the bitter lot  
 To be misjudged, maligned, accused, forgot—  
 Twine martyr's palm among his victor's crown.”

THE END.









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